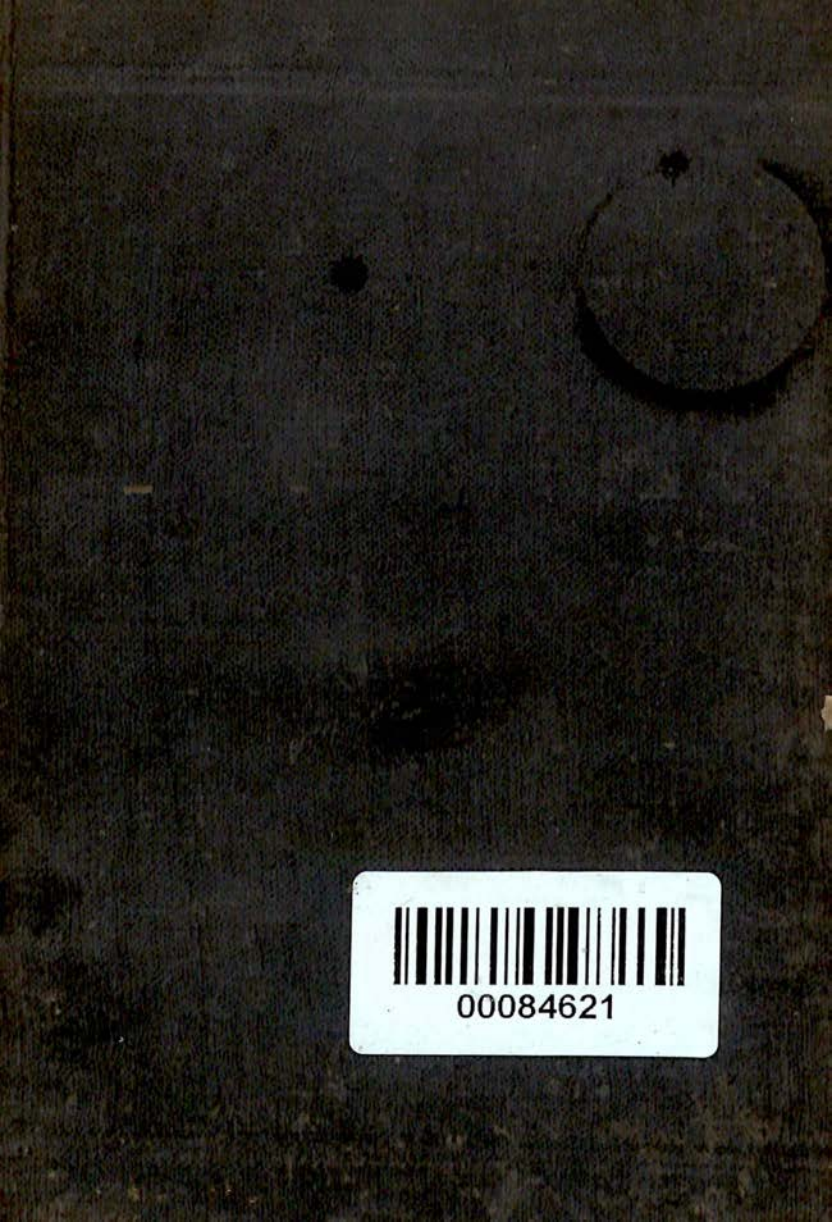
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# LIFE IN A GERMAN VILLAGE

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IN

# A GERMAN VILLAGE

BY THE

HONBLE. MRS HENRY WEYLAND CHETWYND

AUTHOR OF 'NEIGHBOURS AND FRIENDS,' 'JANIE' 'MDLLE. D'ESTANVILLE,' 'THE CRYSTAL HEART,' ETC. ETC.

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DEDICATED

TO

THE GRACEFUL AUTHOR AND SYMPATHETIC FRIEND

WHO SHARED SOME OF MY EXPERIENCES

AND ADDED MUCH TO THEIR

PLEASURE, AND WHO WRITES UNDER

THE NAME OF

"MRS ALEXANDER"

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# LIFE IN A GERMAN VILLAGE.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE ARRIVAL.

Is there any pleasure attained in life that has not a little disappointment lurking somewhere?—a shade of something that serves to remind us that all our plans are fallible? We have carried out a plan successfully,—we have arrived in a German village—we are out of sight of our country people (wishing to avoid speaking English) —and the village is lovely; but . . . the roomy house we expected has dwindled down to one which is not roomy. Our wise and

kind German friend gave up the house first selected because of a want of spring-water and the presence of an open drain, and fell back upon this one. It just holds us, and that is all: it is small, prettily situated, and fresh. The water is delicious spring-water, and there are no drains. The house, besides being smaller than we expected, is badly planned: every room opens into something else, and all the rooms are in a measure thoroughfares. It is very unfortunate, but it cannot be helped,—everything cannot always go exactly as one wishes it.

We have had another disappointment. German habits do not vary much, and, knowing so many other parts of the country, it did not occur to us that a furnished house here and elsewhere are different *things*; but they *are*. One of my children arrived with me before the rest of our party came, *happily*; for, on arrival, we found bedsteads without mattresses, and six chairs and three sofas of enormous size, stuffed with horse-hair, and

with that sloping tendency to the front which, with their slippery nature, makes them horribly uncomfortable; several mirrors against the wall, made of green glass,—*voilà tout!* Not one other thing—not a cup or a saucer, or a pot of any description. Imagine my feelings! I asked the landlady—a woman with a face looking as if it was washed daily in vinegar—where the furniture was. With a majestic wave of her hand she pointed to the bedsteads. . . .

There was nothing for it but to face the situation. In four days we should be twelve in the house. Where were they to sleep, and how was it to be done? When I thought of the stress this woman had laid on the inventory, and saw that the fingers of my two hands were more than was required . . . Inventory indeed! In four days I had everything ready. Looking back now, I do not myself know how it was managed; but managed it was, and I write this, having arranged everything. When I

add that all the furniture was brought from the nearest big town, sixteen miles off, I have quite a feeling of having done wonders.

Till it came we slept on railway rugs. We tried all three sofas in turn at first, but we had a great liking for something that was straight, and took to the floor, as many another person has probably done, and slept the sleep of tired people. We borrowed a cup from one person, a coffee-pot from another, and we had, at any rate, coffee; and we ordered our dinner from a wonderful little restaurant (looking like three bird-cages in one) not far off, and had dinner—quite enough for two people, and consisting of soup, meat, vegetables, and a pudding—for the sum of tenpence. It was very cheap, if a little greasy.

In those few days we also got servants—and not boastfully do I state here that our usual good luck as regards those important people followed us here, and our small German household worked to perfection.

Our cook, a middle-aged married-woman, whose husband, luckily for us, is at the other end of the world, is in reality what she professes to be, a very good cook—"*perfecte Köchin.*" What cream, what pastry, and what delicious puddings she makes! What we appreciate still more is the way in which from the very first she threw herself into our side of the question. How she makes light of inconveniences and a most horribly smoky stove! How exquisitely clean and neat she is in her person and in her work! How clever she is, and how thoroughly un-English in the way she does things not at all in her province! Truth compels me to add, what a temper she has! She works all day, and, like all really industrious people, she has time for everything—but she allows no one else repose. How she keeps them all going and on the alert!

She paid me a very amusing compliment two days ago: "It is such a good thing,"

she said, without a shadow of disrespect in her manner, "that Madam has such a good temper. I am so *heftig*, that if Madam were not very calm we should never get on together." The little German housemaid has her faults, but she does her best, and bears the cook's temper with a truly admirable philosophy: if we got a quicker housemaid, I reflect war might follow. But what a paradise Germany must be to a housemaid! no carpets to sweep; the windows opening like doors; inside the room no grates to clean; no really hard work to do; not even waxed floors—for the floors are painted a dark brown, and in the paint lurks a varnish which causes them to dry instantly and retain their polish. We have an English housemaid, who was inclined to think life was hardly worth having without a switch in her hand; now she is being converted: the carpets are quite as warm when they are not nailed to the floor: a pail of water, a long hard broom, round

which a wet cloth is wrapped, keeps the house as fresh as possible: it is washed from one end to another every morning, and is all done very early; and the windows are cleaned every morning. How often I wonder why, in dusty streets, and almost everywhere in England, the windows are carefully fixed so that they cannot be cleaned at any time without danger! It is fair, however, to say that in many other places in Germany, though the lower windows open inwards, there is a great fixed pane of glass high up, which is always a source of danger, and more than one girl is killed every year in her hazardous pursuit of cleanliness under difficulties.

We find the necessaries of life easy to obtain here. The meat is very inferior to English meat, and dear; fruit plentiful and disappointing. We are in Northern Germany, and there are no grapes, which are so plentiful in the South. We have here much more rain and much less heat. The

climate an English climate, with heavier rain and a hotter sun. Vegetables of the commoner sorts are abundant. Peas and French beans grow in every little garden, and each variety of French bean goes by a different name. *Turkische erbsen* (Turkish peas), wax beans, green beans, are all French beans in different shapes, and used at different times, dressed differently.

It is very necessary for the head of a house to understand the local names for common things, for they vary all over Germany. Turnips are *Steckrübans* here; while in Saxony they are *toornips*. We heard much of *Spiegelei*, and naturally thought they were the *œufs au miroir* common in France; but they are simply fried eggs, common to every wayside inn.

It is amusing to see the great differences that exist between this place and England in little things; the small waxy potatoes only are appreciated here, and the mealy potatoes are given to the pigs. *Compote*, or stewed

fruit, in some shape appears at all meals. I do not think we should ever get reconciled to uncooked sausages and ham, &c., however much they may be smoked; and raw fish as served in salad is not inviting,—and yet, do we not eat oysters raw?

The days go swiftly by, and we enjoy the life immensely. German becomes more fluent, and German books creep into favour, and nothing can be more completely free from excitement, or from what are called pleasures in England. Coffee out of doors under the trees while we work and talk—a walk in a new direction—the discovery of a wild strawberry bed or some fragrant honeysuckle,—everything is enjoyed. I have called on all my neighbours, and this ceremony is not ceremonious here. Our kindest and nearest neighbours are close by. As they speak, read, and write all modern languages, and read everything instructive or amusing in those languages, they will of course read this, and recognise their

portraits. How much they do to make our lives happy! The gentleman once held a Court appointment, and now has one under Government; the lady is a Dane, with the gentle refined manners, the extreme lovableness these northern people so often have. Knowing so many languages gives them such a large view of things, they are able to see things not from their own standing-point only, and have a generous liking and appreciation for our country. They lend us books, send us flowers and newspapers, and we have very pleasant walks in cool evenings, and pleasant talks. Meeting occasionally by appointment in the woods, and often without any appointment, we invade each other's houses in the most informal way after dinner, and always part with increased liking on our side.

The woods all round are perfect, but they have a drawback—they swarm with the most bloodthirsty midges and mosquitoes I ever

knew. They pursue me with unexampled ferocity, and I am a helpless victim in their hands. I am covered with bites — face, arms, and hands; they attack the others also, and they render our nights sleepless. Every one who sees our plight has a remedy to recommend. We try everything and everything fails! despair is at hand! Of course our cook comes to the rescue: is there anything she does not know? Petroleum sprinkled through the room at nightfall effectually keeps them at bay, and a few drops on my hat saves me through the day. Some people may dislike this remedy, but I am grateful, and do not abuse it.

There is much here to interest one in the manners and customs of our poorer neighbours. There is something homely and pleasant in the unfailing greeting given us as we pass. The people work so hard in regard to time, but they are very much slower than with us, and have what appear

to us very unwieldy tools, — their spades are so long in the handle, and so curiously shaped; and in digging they never put their feet on them; they turn over the earth in what appears quite a superficial way: but whatever they do it answers the purpose, as they grow excellent things in their gardens. Their ploughs are very ill made and heavy, and must be a great strain on the horses; and the harrows are also old-fashioned; but there is nothing like high farming near us. Time does not seem to be of much consequence, and the absence of great activity gives a curious feeling of restfulness. A few words of kindness goes a long way; and we have been delighted with the presents of flowers we receive at unexpected moments, —quantities of sweet old-fashioned flowers, as well as roses, tied up in great inartistic *bunches*—not *bouquets*—with a delightfully unconventional look. And we cherish these lupins and carnations, rosemary and pinks, in red earthenware jars, with dabs of coloured

paint, where it produces a certain effect, and in which the flowers look lovely, and make bright bits of colour in our bare-looking rooms.

Very near us—happily within a walk—is another village, much larger, more in the world and more important—not considered so healthy as ours. This village is beautiful, however, looked at from an artist's point of view. How picturesque it is! Quaint carved buildings, whose upper storeys project far beyond the lower, and are covered with rich and eccentric devices. Under this projection sit contented resting figures, smoking the inevitable pipe of great length, with bright red kerchiefs round their throats. The water of the small river near is brought all through the place—by means of canals—and runs along at the back of all the principal streets. Almost every house has a wooden platform projecting into the water, as if made on purpose to come well into a picture. These places are at times gay with

washerwomen, who rub away and talk and laugh, till the air is full of sound and the place is full of life; but in the evening family parties take supper there. Great elms grow all along opposite, and lime-trees, with such wealth of flowers this year, that the trees look all flower,—and these trees cast such deep shadows that the coloured dresses, and creepers clinging round the platforms, stand out splendidly. Here on hot evenings you not only see but hear the buzzing of many voices and the clinking of knitting-needles. The scent from the limes is delicious, and there is something indescribably soothing and restful in the scene. Wandering along you come upon storks congregating round a celebrated frog-pond. The frogs are all croaking as if they were remonstrating with the common enemy. Watching these dignified and solemn birds one begins to understand something of the feeling about them—there *is* something mysterious about them, some charm which acts

upon the imagination. They arrive in Germany on a particular day, in great numbers, and leave it on a particular day. We forgot the date of their arrival, but the 23d of August sees them go from here. For some days previous to this they are seen collecting in great numbers, and then they are off. Sometimes they leave a weak bird or two behind, but the others have gone to Egypt and other places.

Walking to this village is always a pleasant thing to do, and we sometimes linger late, completely fascinated by the dreamy beauty under our eyes: everything so still, the reflection of the houses and trees are seen in the slow-moving river, but dimly and mysteriously as the short twilight comes on. One evening in particular we shall never forget. We leant over a wooden bridge which commanded a view of the village, and we heard rich voices singing some of the *Volkslieder*. Past countless water-lilies, gleaming white in the growing

dusk—brushing past some tall bulrushes which fringed the bank—a friendly stork rose with a rush, gathered his strength after a moment or two, and sailed majestically past us. Three times he wheeled round and came close to us; and as we watched him with admiration, he bowed his head as if he understood our feelings and was gratified by them.

## CHAPTER II.

### SCHÜTZENFEST.

LIFE would perhaps be too easy and too smooth here were it not for certain small excitements. Though never, we must allow, shown to us, our excellent cook has a temper: she is *heftig*, as she herself says, which in her case means something more than "hasty." It is an unfortunate fact that our landlady—a sour-faced person, as before stated—has also a temper, and she has done a very unwise thing for any landlady to do. She lives morning, noon, and night in a room in the next house (which also belongs to her), and of which the windows, like two observant eyes, command

our back door and the little garden, which is still in her possession.

How many prohibitions she issues! Her feelings are continually being irritated by the differences between our habits and her own. Our baths are a perpetual astonishment to her; and the quantity of water required—though it does not affect her—seems to annoy her. Over the spring a very primitive pump has been erected, and she relieves her feelings by rushing there and scolding the servants, without making any definite complaint. One morning about 5 A.M. I hear a furious clatter of tongues, and recognise the cook's voice and the deeper and crosser tones of our landlady. In a cowardly manner I rise and let down the blinds and retreat to bed again, but through the open window I hear them in turns accusing each other of every sin mentioned in the Decalogue. By-and-by the storm subsides. With inward trepidation and assumed calmness I go to order dinner,

and find the storm has cleared the atmosphere. "We tell each other the truth," says the cook, amiably, "and then we are better; but—never, no never, shall I think of that woman as I did! How often have I let her taste some delicacy left from Madam's table! She has a sweet tooth and appreciates the odour of vanilla. Recipes! I regret to say I have taught her to make two soups. Man cannot foresee everything. For me now she ceases to exist: nothing more shall she learn from me. I never will speak to her again."

Two days afterwards they are walking in the garden together: our cook is a little stately, the landlady if anything cringing. The cook returns to the house with a bunch of magnificent eschalots in her hands, which she holds up to me with a smile of deprecation. "They are the best in the place," she says, meekly, "and one must make sacrifices when one wishes something." Next morning a bunch of rosebuds, surrounded

with forget-me-nots, arrives down-stairs, is graciously accepted, and that afternoon they sit in friendly neighbourhood under the acacia, and all goes well—till next time.

A *fête* is given in the neighbourhood, to which we all wish to go. Various reports reach us of illuminations, music, and all manner of beautiful things to be bought—and, filled with the remembrance of *fêtes* in France, we go.

It was a lovely evening. The whole day it had thundered and poured, and the possibility of not being able to go had, as usual, enhanced the pleasure of finding ourselves *en route*. Our village had no decorations; but almost every one went to the next village, where, in an open space in a huge wood, the *fête* was held. Long before we reached it our road was marked out for us by wreaths stretched across, flags and poles covered with flowers, streams of people moving along, all gay, laughing, and evidently determined to enjoy themselves; and we

also got into the holiday spirit, which, I confess, I always find very infectious.

What crowds of people are going! *Vierländerinnen* in their quaint costumes, with their gold and silver ornaments worn only on state occasions, and which gives them such a well-to-do look. Many had no hats on—and the black skull-cap, with its huge bow behind, looks so quaint. The married women cut off all their hair when they marry; the unmarried have it in long plaits dangling down their backs, tied with ribbon. Their figures are much more picturesque than pretty, as the skirts of their dresses are enormously full from the hips, so that, at a distance, their figures look out of proportion; and though they walk well, like most people who carry weights on their heads, the curious fulness of the short skirt gives a funny sweep from side to side, which is not graceful as they move. Tidy maid-servants are also among the throng. In this part of Germany they all wear very neat

quilled caps, and, indeed, are beautifully clean in their personal appearance, and look like well-bred English housemaids with their clean prints and nice aprons. Women pushing along cradle-perambulators, in which the babies lie under huge feather pillows; men of all ages; many old men with their grandchildren: some sing as they move along; all are gay, eager, and a little excited.

The entry is twopence, and an extra penny gives admittance to the ball-rooms. I say ball-*rooms* advisedly, for there are three, well floored and large. They have water-tight canvas roofs, but are open all round the sides. A rough plank supported on trestles affords a seat. All round the roof, as well as inside, shine quantities of coloured lamps; and a chandelier of very primitive construction hangs from the centre and throws a pretty and subdued light on the moving figures. We stand outside and watch this dance beginning: there are no

chaperons, but the strictest propriety prevails. One fair girl with a cap, and having a very good figure, is evidently the belle of the ball. She has on such a well-fitting dress; and though she has a certain consciousness of being a beauty, she does not look vain, and has a simple and modest manner which is very attractive. This girl refuses a good many partners—even one of our postmen, who is tall and good-looking, and whose mild fair face assumes a morose expression; but she dances with a rising butcher. And how well they dance! They fly—their figures sway in time to the music—there is absolute poetry in their movements.

It is a little distracting that the *carousel*, with its many gaily-trapped mimic horses, and its tired living one, is close by, and its noisy brass band plays one tune over and over again with the most unceasing industry. Very near is another band, with a trumpet a good deal out of temper; and one cannot

help wishing that as so many bands are present they would try to play the same tune, or play a little farther apart. Gounod's "Faust," many waltzes, and the very newest polka, mingle together in a manner truly bewildering. But noise is dominant at present: children are blowing newly-acquired trumpets, and beating drums, and testing the powers of their lungs in all sorts of ways; the shrill cry of a baby pierces through the other noises, and it is deafening. We move on and find ourselves away from the confusion of sound, and near a platform where the band of the Mecklenburg Dragoons is playing, and whose playing is the perfection of military music. How beautiful it is! They are playing "Fidelio;" and certainly it is most enjoyable under the canopy of heaven, with the shining stars and the sweet breath of evening all round us. It is the perfection of enjoyment—the enjoyment that has a tinge of melancholy in it.

The music affects every one. The children near hush into silence and float their little air-balloons noiselessly with an absorbed expression and rounded eyes. The music stops, and the bandmaster surveys us, over a large expanse of uniform, with an expression of modest but conscious merit, and smiles at us affably in all the happy sense of an illustrious position, when his dignity receives a shock. An old acquaintance whose status in life is not high, judging from his dress, has clambered up the steps behind him, and slaps him vigorously on the back. His change of countenance was very amusing, and his audience showed their sense of humour by a roar of laughter, during which we left the scene and walked homewards by the light of a lovely moon—finding countless glow-worms on our way—not conscious of fatigue till we got home.

## CHAPTER III.

### A THUNDERSTORM.

VERY near us, only separated by a large field of buckwheat from the small beech-wood before our house, lies the big beech-wood. Most people will agree with me, that, next to a wild sea-shore (not a fashionable beach), the beauty and quiet of a huge wood are one of our greatest pleasures. I do not mean a wood trimmed and regulated into monotonous regularity—like, for instance, the forest of St Germain, or others I could name—but a place where the trees evidently date from a time when forestry was an unknown science, and they have not been trained in the way they ought to grow.

Such a forest is the "big wood" lying near us. It has great masses of wood untouched by the hand of man. The large trees have pushed places for themselves, and have dwarfed the weaker trees, just as mankind does in the world. These smaller trees have succumbed to adverse influences, and have in many places left nothing but a root with a few twigs to show they ever existed at all. In these open spaces, besides the most beautiful wild flowers, are countless blaeberries and wild strawberries, affording great happiness and some profit to many children of all ages. There are fine oaks and a few maples and ash-trees; but the glory of this forest is the beech-trees. These have branched out and flourished till many families might camp beneath the shelter of one or two, with their interlaced branches; and their huge and picturesque boles make splendid places for hide-and-seek, as the children know. We frequently explore this wood, get bewildered in its countless paths, and

often find ourselves moving, if not arguing, in a circle.

One afternoon we determine to explore it thoroughly and to see its other side, and we succeed in doing so. After some mistakes and many inquiries from the woodcutters, we arrive at a place where the trees grow much farther apart, and finally we stand on a high piece of ground with scanty herbage, several goats, and the familiar scabious and crow's-foot at our feet. The country lay around and below us, well wooded and undulating, with pleasant fields and warm-looking homesteads set in orchards, and making pretty colouring with their deep red roofs. All along the valley moves the small, slow river, taking life easily without hindrances in the way of stones, and looking somehow a type of the peasants near which it passes, who are placid, phlegmatic, and never in a hurry.

All at once, with a swiftness we never remember seeing equalled, a huge black

cloud gloomed above the wood, and a peal of thunder makes us start. We were far from the wood and down the hill just now, and we make for one of the cottages apparently near. But long before we reach it we are drenched through. How we race! Pelt comes the rain, which is cold and has the flavour of hail, and on we go, crossing the river, without caring for an extra wetting, and go straight through a marsh with the most perfect indifference. It rains in a way one seldom sees: our feeble defences are utterly useless, and we arrive at the door of the cottage in a deplorable state. The woman surveys us with an admirable calm, and bears like a heroine our dripping figures on her spotless floor. Without wasting words she helps us out of our wet things. The children are rolled up and put near the fire. I get into a loose jacket and short linsey petticoat, and let down and dry my hair, feeling to the very bottom of my heart how comfortable warmth and dryness is. Then

she goes on preparing the mid-day meal, going ever and again to a little inner room, and returning with an ever-increasing sadness on her face; but being strangers we did not like to make inquiries, and were anxious to give as little trouble as we could. She invites us to share the family dinner, which we decline, because we have not had time to get hungry; and she helps her husband, who comes in, and two younger women, and her children. The dinner is excellent to all appearance, but has no meat. There is a soup made of beans and other vegetables, rye-bread and cheese and potatoes. What struck us all, however, was the sad and depressed looks of these people. From first to last the woman's looks show that there is some sorrow weighing on her.

The storm goes off at last, and we make our way home in our own draggled-looking clothes; and as we go home we pass over hundreds of small branches torn down by the violence of the storm—the gravel and

earth is swept from all the paths down which now the muddiest water is running. Such quick destruction is not common even here, where the rain always comes with a vengeance; but some ditches have given way and everything is flooded. A few days afterwards we go once more to the little cottage, and were startled to perceive that death had been busy there—a little coffin lay at the door, on a table covered with flowers. Never did death look more lovely than in that baby that lay there: flowers were in the small white hands, and the face had still a tinge of colour, and flowers were strewed over and around the waxen-looking form. We learnt afterwards that it had been hopelessly ill when we were there, but that the woman had not liked to claim our sympathy because we were strangers. That same evening we saw the father and mother and two friends pass to the God's acre, carrying the little coffin between them; and the simple procession woke many reflections.

Not only on this, but on many other occasions, and in different classes, one could not help feeling what a contrast there is in the greater simplicity with which funerals are managed in Germany to those at home, where often hired mourners and yards of crape are supposed to testify to the sorrow of relations, and where many a load of debt is added to the mourner's grief.

It was pleasant to see how much sympathy existed among the poor for each other in our village: they rejoiced and they wept together. Of course there were feuds—human nature is human nature everywhere—but how much they lightened their lives by sharing them! Old Frau Bott has had troubles: her husband was killed, and her sons have not been successful. She is less well off than many of the people, so in this warm weather she carries her dinner to one neighbour or another, where they cook it for her. Sometimes they take it in turns to cook for several families—that is to say,

one fire will cook several dinners. They wash their clothes together. The birth of a baby causes quite a universal excitement: everybody feels they must somehow show their sentiments, and it is all done in such a neighbourly spirit. The openness of their lives and the total want of reserve would be impossible in England, where every one considers it a high merit "to keep one's self to one's self." Outside the doors on warm summer evenings they dine in public. Their fare may be, and is, as simple as possible, but they do not mind who knows it; and it is this entire absence of a wish to look better off than they are which is at the root of German economy. How many expenses people go to in England for fear of its not "looking well"!

A wedding in the village is quite a subject for universal rejoicing, though the different merits of bride and bridegroom are discussed by each party very amusingly, each of course being superior to the other in their friends'

estimation. Of course more crockery and more spoons, &c., are wanted for such an occasion, and all the teaspoons in the village will be offered immediately,—and the teaspoons attainable there are so funny, and have a way of bending in the centre if at all used, which makes one afraid of using them.

In contrast to the spoons, which are very unpractical, is the stoneware, which is as nearly unbreakable as anything brittle can be. People may call this crockery clumsy, or anything they like, but it is difficult to see a fault when they are so good for knocking about; and it must be remembered that a German servant, male or female, does test them severely. A German footman is not the noiseless deferential being we have in England: on the contrary, he speaks freely, and gives his opinion on many subjects, and will occasionally, in handing round a dish, recommend it; and if you find fault, he invariably defends himself with some astonish-

ment and an injured voice: but he does a great deal of work, and it is ridiculous to expect from him the immaculate plate and perfect breeding long training gives in England; nor is it required in German service.

We were invited to tea soon after our arrival, and walk across the fields to a pleasant country-house. Something in the whole proceedings and in the surroundings remind us a little of Cranford. Life is so much what is called old-fashioned here—there is so much genuine kindness, so much absence of luxury and show—it is like living in old times we read of in books, before the reign of housekeepers and stewards began, when the lady of the house, even if she was a duchess, took a personal and direct interest in her still-room and her maids; in the making of rose-water, and the mysterious receipts which we find occasionally in some worm-eaten book. We were received in the verandah with friendliness and grace, by the lady of the house and her pretty daughters.

There is a Spanish lady present — such a lovely person; and we talked German, French, and a little English.

It is warm and still outside. Overhead the sky has the loveliest colours; while behind the trees the sun sinks in a fiery glow, against which their stems and shapes look dark. It is a scene Danby has often painted, and in richness of colour is unsurpassed.

Lamps are brought, but still we sit outside, talking of literature and art, and the different ways of different lands,—all admiring each other's country with that natural reservation in favour of one's own, without which one would be but a worthless patriot at best.

Like most Germans we have met, they prefer English novels to their own—a verdict experience has taught us to confirm; and their criticisms are clever, un-English, and very original. One drops easily from literature to manners and customs. Besides being much occupied with their households,

German women of all ranks take a much more active superintendence of their children when young than we find necessary. A mother, with one and perhaps two nurses, is herself always there. She walks by her baby's cradle, often washes it, and, in fact, does what an English upper nurse does, sacrificing all her time to it in a way we would find tedious and unnecessary. One reason, perhaps, is, that there are no upper nurses to be compared to those in England, and nowhere do you see babies kept like English babies; still the demand would of course create the supply. A gentleman, who was himself a bachelor, gave a most amusing description of a friend's household. This friend was the husband of an adorable little woman, with two or three adorable children and a baby. When he wanted to talk to her—"the baby;" if it was restless, so was she. If he wanted her to accompany him away from home for even two nights—"the children." If he wanted her to play, it

would wake the baby; it was present at all meals, was of an inquiring turn of mind, and used its fingers as much as its eyes. She never read anything—she had no time; she took no interest in passing events; she did nothing but survey life from the side of her baby's perambulator. On the hottest day she would race about to amuse one child, and on the coldest she would freeze at a shop-window to please another. In the middle of the most important intelligence her husband would find her counting the stitches in a baby's sock. How the mothers present laughed and abused him! owning that sometimes the maternal care was carried too far.

The cradle-perambulators have, to our minds, some drawbacks. We think the feather pillows under which the children lie for so many hours weakens the limbs, and that this accounts for the extraordinary proportion of children whose legs are bent either outwards or inwards; and the sudden

transition from the darkness of one moment, when they lie shrouded behind the blue curtains, and the next, when they are exposed to the fullest glare of sunshine, must injure the eyes. A careful or experienced mother thinks of this sometimes; but often you see the hood suddenly thrown back, and the tender eyes exposed instantaneously to an intense glare; and we felt the young eyes must be injured, and that it perhaps accounted in some measure for the defective sight which has caused a good deal of anxious inquiry on the part of the Government lately.

Tea was soon ready — such a pleasant informal meal, where the daughters of the house, as well as the servants, waited upon everybody with a real solicitude which went far to remove the uncomfortable feeling of being so waited upon. Conversation was helped, if not by the bubbling urn, by the cheery sound of a Russian *samovar* placed upon a side-table. We enjoy home-made

cakes, and are gently rallied upon our prejudices against smoked ham and sausages, guiltless of any other cooking. A talk springs up about the various accents, and also about recent political events and changes. United Germany has of course still much to do to get blended together at heart; but this evening well-bred people avoid personalities, and general good feeling turns the subject.

Then all at once rises out of the darkness a beautiful chorus of men's voices, the tenors sustaining the air, and the basses the accompaniment; then they sing in unison lovely old airs, with the pathos belonging to true music. It is *quite* beautiful; their voices rise and fall, and are wafted capriciously towards us by a soft evening breeze. The surprise had been planned by the lady of the house, and not even her husband was in the secret, and he is touched, and kisses her hand. . . .

When the singing is over it is time to go,

and we are escorted half-way home by some of the party. We part under the great trees, and linger on our homeward way. To-night there is so much to admire! The field of buckwheat, now in fullest flower, lies like a field of glittering silver under the brilliant moon; a row of aspens are quivering in the same light, the acacia-tree sends out its exquisite perfume, owls are hooting in their melancholy way, and the frogs are quite uproarious. What an inconceivable uproar they make!

The beauty of the night, however, comes home to us, and overpowers all other sensations. It is difficult to go in and shut it all out; but we remember our early hours, and reluctantly resign ourselves, and in a short time the owls and the frogs have the night entirely to themselves.

## CHAPTER IV.

### HANOVER.

We have just been to a most delightful part of Hanover—a part bordering on the marshes, but not unhealthy—a land so rich that it seems to realise the flowing with milk and honey of Scripture.

Besides the extraordinary fertility of the soil, which produces such gratifying results to the eye, this particular part of Hanover possesses a great many advantages. It is so near the sea that the delightful sea-breezes are ever there, cooling the hot breath of long summer days and tempering the cold days of winter; and when you live with luxuriant vegetation and beauti-

ful woods all round you, and are within reach of *shrimps*, most people will allow that many of the good things of this world are collected there.

I am not going to "specify the locality," which an American lady once asked me to do when I told her of an old curiosity shop in Paris, nor behave so unkindly to my German friends as to send an English army there; for when I add that mutton (and such good mutton!) is 6d. a lb., and that most excellent servants are to be had for £4 to £6 a-year, and the Christmas and Easter presents, my prophetic vision sees an array of English fathers and householders preparing to invade that land: the bitter remembrance of the last butcher's bills, and the thousand requirements of the domestics at home, will be too much for them, and to a man they will immediately go there. The prices, of course, would go up, and this favoured spot would become as other lands are. Of course it is a little difficult of

access, which explains the present state of things; but in summer the way is very pleasant, unless you happen to be a bad sailor, which, fortunately, is not one of our trials.

We had to start from Hamburg very early, and went on board a ridiculous-looking little steamer, which made the fuss about itself these small steamers always seem to do. It spluttered and screamed, and puffed itself down the Elbe, encountering a very boisterous stormy wind without being at all the worse for it. I suppose it had ballast, but it certainly behaved as if it had none. It jumped about over the big waves at the mouth of the Elbe, and went over from side to side, recovering itself with a start, which made it quite difficult to sit still, much less to eat the excellent beefsteak we indulged in: but we were so hungry! much too hungry to mind; and we held each other's plates in turns, amid much laughing,—the wind and the motion put one into such

very good spirits, and we enjoyed everything. We had some pilots on board, going down to the pilot station at the mouth of the Elbe—for the old *régime* still rules there; and one set of pilots manage the lower part, and another set the upper part, of the Elbe —the only difference being that Danes and Germans do it indifferently now, whereas in former days the stations were more national.

Certainly it would be difficult to find a finer set of men than these pilots. All over middle size, and none of them young, they had splendid faces, though very weather-beaten and brown, the expression so fine. They were also singularly intelligent. One old fellow, like an old Norse king, made great friends with me, and invited me to go and see him, his wife, and his daughter. He spoke English, French, and German equally well. He was a Dane by birth, but had been long on the German coast, and had the gentle, calm, and self-possessed manner of a man of the world. I asked

him which language he preferred talking: he said, "I like all four languages when they are well spoken, but English is the best of all languages to be angry in," and he laughed.

He explained various marks as he went along, and shook hands warmly when we parted. He told me he had saved a good deal of money, and that his wife and daughter wished him to stay at home, and give up going out; but he said, "What should I do if I gave it up? perhaps I might take to drinking; and it is very nice to earn money: some weeks I make from £6 to £12, and that is a great deal to give up." He was so entertaining that I felt quite sorry to say good-bye to him.

At length we landed, and found that the kind Herr Graf we were going to visit had sent to meet us. We drove through an almost entirely level country, with woods in the distance, but which, from its entire absence of hedges or fences, looked like one

immense plain. The fields are divided by ditches—some very wide and deep; and the size of the fields themselves, and the look of immense space this absence of hedges gives, make the landscape monotonous. Another peculiarity is the immense height to which the ridges are raised in the centre; they are piled up to carry off the rain; and though this is not noticeable at a little distance, when you are near it looks very curious.

Partly from this arrangement, which makes the work very heavy, partly from the immensely stiff soil, four horses or oxen are required where two would do in England.

This land produces crops and grass such as one hardly ever sees elsewhere; but the size and length of straw, of course, is out of all proportion to the grain. The marsh sheep thrive so rapidly that there is a proverb about them. There are two breeds of these marsh sheep, small and large, and both make delicious mutton. The small

sheep can be bought for 9s., and are then ready to eat; but the large ones, costing 19s., require to be fattened. They come to a good weight—80 lb.; but when you see them walking about, they look fabulously large, and as if they ought to weigh more. Their drawback is the wool, which is coarse, thick, and short.

These sheep play an important part in the economy of the poor in Hanover: one is generally tethered at every cottage-door. They give a plentiful supply of milk, and are said invariably to have twin lambs.

The house of our host was charming, being both thoroughly pretty and thoroughly comfortable inside; while outside, its size, and the quantities of beautiful creepers growing so luxuriantly all over it, made it look picturesque and attractive in spite of being red all over—red roof and red walls; but it had a moat, and the plants and shrubs growing about it were on the same luxuriant scale as the creepers, and every-

thing looked so thriving and healthy, that that in itself had a charm.

I never saw such a quantity of old oak carving—really beautiful carving—as here, on cabinets and panels. All through Hanover you can still get this carving: but the best bits have been picked up long ago. Old blue china and old tapestry set it off; and the whole place is the happiest combination of Scotch and German comforts and plenty; for our hostess is Scotch.

Though giving all possible admiration to the very beautiful sheep, we cannot say that the cattle, though partaking of the size of most things in Hanover, are equally worthy of admiration. They are coarse and bony, with ugly heads and rough coats, and horribly ill shaped. Not those belonging to the Herr Graf and one or two enterprising proprietors, who for some years have improved everything; but, speaking generally, they seemed to possess to perfection every indi-

vidual point cattle ought not to possess,—certainly if this rich grass does not fatten them nothing will.

Many make their way seaboard, and go over to England, where they are probably converted into the cheap coarse beef to be had at various seaports. They are essentially Pharaoh's lean kine, and are very ugly, gaunt, and ill-favoured.

The Hanoverian horses are also huge, and can be bought for very moderate prices. We were told—and only mention it as having been told—that they do not stand the change, not of climate, but of grass, and are apt to die soon after getting to England. Only for some such reason as this is it possible that magnificent horses with good feet and good legs, and good points everywhere, should in their prime sell for £36 to £56 within three days of England and of London; but as we do not buy horses, I leave this problem to be solved by those who do, and merely say what I was told several

times. In Hanover these horses (over 16 hands) go fast, and make nothing of immense long distances on the level roads.

Though all this part of the country is very flat it has a certain charm of its own. Scattered all over it are the most comfortable-looking homesteads, with the invariably high-pitched roof which tells of heavy rains, and look very comfortable, surrounded by the blue-green of huge willows, with many a poplar-tree by way of contrast. For every house is red, and where the roof is not thatched with reeds, it is always also red; and as the walls are fenced, framed with wooden beams, as in the south of England, they are always more or less picturesque, only what in England is cob is here filled up with red bricks.

The plan of these homesteads is almost always the same—a low house with an immensely high roof covers the dwelling-house and barn in one continuous line, and one or more additions at the back.

Beautifully clean windows; a verandah or a porch with chairs and tables; a large flower-bed in front, where huge plants of maize or castor-oil plants serve as an effectual screen from the road; willows, poplars, and a few other trees; a little lake or a pond,—this scene repeats itself over and over again with but little variety. At the back, perhaps a whole row of willows drooping into a muddy stream in which the cattle trample, ducks, and a look of general untidiness, complete the picture. Every now and then a village, where at any rate the outside of the houses are clean, a picturesque church, and a general look of well-doing, meet your eye. There are little evidences of poverty; woods —some small, some large in extent—are here and there seen, and an occasional windmill.

The homesteads belong to a race of peasant proprietors, who have at present a great deal more money than education, and whose wealth and ignorance often put them into very absurd positions. Endless are the

stories told of them,—their love of show—their costly suppers, including champagne—and the diamonds they buy and never wear.

We drove about and saw much that was interesting. The feeling that all was new and yet very homelike made everything very pleasant; and we saw all under the favourable auspices of the Herr Graf, who takes the interest of an English country gentleman in everything—from his horses to his pigs.

For some days there was something going on we could not understand. Every one but the Frau Gräfin looked important and mysterious, and her occasional prolonged absences proved that whatever it was she was behind the scenes.

One morning we also were to know all about it; we were awakened by music, and, rubbing our eyes, wondered what it denoted. It came nearer and nearer; it was a brass band, trumpets greatly predominating, and, as somebody says somewhere—

"The heartiest will
Made up for skill
Not there."

How they played, and what good lungs they must have had! In a moment we remembered it all. It was the Herr Graf's birthday; and the Herr Graf has large possessions, and is, besides, one of the most popular of men. This band blew as though the strength of their lungs and the noise they made were a test of their loyalty. Do not many other bands do the same thing on royal occasions?

We dressed in time to the music, we breakfasted in time to the music, and, looking back to that day, I cannot remember any cessation; of course the original band must have rested—but music was there all the same, and no change was perceptible. After examining a table covered with presents, and bestowing due admiration on a huge cake surrounded by little candles—one for each year of the Count's life—we

were invited to go up-stairs to a large drawing-room with a balcony, on which chairs were placed, and which was very prettily decorated. Hardly were we seated when a procession was seen approaching.

As it drew near we saw a large waggon, surrounded by people, and on it was placed a cradle, being the representation of the first appearance of the day's hero. Then appeared a little boy, surrounded by various people, representing his school life. Then he appeared as a young man studying law. In slow succession came one group after another, each depicting some part of his life. The most amusing scene was one intended to show the various occasions on which he had lost his heart, — a waggon-load of *alte Flammen*, consisting of Swedish, Italian, English, Greek, and Spanish figures, the dresses capitally arranged, and the figures well posed. Of course every one roared with laughter. The final scene was a huge slipper, the German inter-

pretation of matrimony being "under the slipper." Slowly the procession disappeared and returned; it was so well done that we felt we might be looking on at some pageant in the middle ages. Each hit was well received, and no one more thoroughly enjoyed it than the Herr Graf himself.

The whole procession was done by his own servants, his own waggons, and his own horses. There were eighty people employed, and the only outsider was a small boy from the village to represent him as a schoolboy.

The music played more vigorously than ever; the people shouted "Hoch!" beer was distributed, and dancing began. By-and-by every one had a substantial meal, a great many more *hochs* were shouted; and we finally went to bed, taking with us into our dreams a confused sense of music, a trumpet which was rather unruly, horses prancing, gay colours, crowds of people, and great enjoyment.

Certainly life here is very much the life of old times in England. People do not make set and formal visits; they go over to see each other, and an impromptu arrival is made welcome, and carriages are put up, and an informal and most plentiful dinner appears. Then comes strolling through the grounds; and very good music. No one is bored; the men smoke, and every one is pleased. Then the evening comes on: what a delightful tea! And by the help of a glorious moon, people disperse to their various homes, having seen their friends without any effort, and really enjoyed themselves.

Another visit we paid in this delightful country. We went to stay for a few days with a lady and her daughters, who lived in an enlarged and improved sort of homestead such as we have already described.

How often in former days we had read of a *house-place!* and now we found that the

plan of the house up-stairs and down included this very thing.

All the rooms communicated with each other, and each opened into a large central room, in no sense a hall, because it was independent of the hall door, and could be quite shut off from it. It was a very pleasant place, where every one met. Tables stood about, and at one of these we breakfasted and dined. Plentiful breakfasts and good plain dinners! Cakes which rivalled Yorkshire cakes, bread and biscuits of all kinds, all made by the cheerful, active hands of the "high well-born" daughters of the house; bread possessing that brownness and crustiness baker's bread is always innocent of; home-cured and smoked meats and preserves; and such cream!

Through the widely-opened doors the scent of flowers and the hum of bees came in. From where we sat we could see the great waggons loaded with corn going

slowly by, the drivers cracking their long whips as only Germans succeed in doing, and shouting to each other and their big horses. We notice gladly the kindness they show their horses, but know from sad experience it is rather exceptional, as in no country are the drovers and drivers more stupidly unregarding of the sufferings of animals under their care than German horse-keepers, merely from stolid stupidity and thorough ignorance, and not from any want of humanity.

All the crops here are "gathered into barns;" any left out and stacked are the refuse of the fields, and sell for much less, even when they are built of the overplus of a very bountiful crop.

This plan makes the barns quite enormous; and sometimes when you see a very imposing-looking homestead, the living rooms take up a very small proportion; and when you open a door at the further

end of the passage, you find yourself in the cow-byre, with low beams overhead, and all above you the riches of the fields.

We enjoyed our pleasant days here: the extreme cheerfulness and the novelty of the life made everything seem bright and pleasant to us. Life seemed so natural and sweet, it was like realising some idyl; and when we looked in the calm kind face of our hostess—one of many sorrows—we felt that the ceaseless activity of her life, and her real and unaffected piety, accounted for her bearing so cheerfully trials which might have crushed to the earth most women of a feebler and less spirited type. Up at five daily, she was the personal superintendent of every single thing, and was as good a hand at bargaining about the sale of her cattle as though she were not the gentlest and most quiet-looking specimen of womanhood.

Altogether our Hanoverian visits will

long remain a vivid and charming remembrance of a very pleasant part of our lives; and our departure was only rendered less sorrowful by the hope of one day finding ourselves once more there.

## CHAPTER V.

### LÜBECK.

EVERY one who appreciates old-world things, and who likes to realise old times as much as possible, should go to Lübeck.

There is certainly no place we have seen where the past is so vividly present. Not only the churches and public buildings, but the architecture of the town, and the remains of it where it has been modernised, the quaint carts, the very dresses, the shape of the market-baskets, and the hats of the people,—all are as seen in paintings long ago, and you realise the "has been" in a way you rarely do.

The many spires of the churches, almost

all possessing the lovely lizard-green so appreciated by painters in search of "colour," make Lübeck very picturesque seen from any side. Then its position; the quantity of water—as usual, when possible, converted into highways; fine trees, and undulating ground on one side,—give it beauty and a cheerful look in spite of the most extraordinary absence of life in its streets. We heard afterwards that this has often been remarked, but it struck us very much, in walking straight down its principal street, to meet no one save some half-a-dozen servants or tradesmen. There was no one apparently shopping; there was no bustle; the shopkeepers were sitting in front of their doors smoking; and when we went to get some photographs, the man seemed to regret to move into his shop to get them for us. The few people we talked to spoke in a rather suppressed voice, which had a peculiar effect upon us. We found ourselves dropping into a slower walk, and talking also in a

suppressed voice. The spirit of the place fell upon us in spite of a sense of amusement at finding ourselves so susceptible.

Passing the curious archway, with its two thick towers, which stands near the railway station, and most appropriately seems to guard the entrance to the town, our eyes were delighted at every step. In the old market-place, where open galleries are supported on richly-carved arches, and all along the streets, you come upon endless beautiful "bits." Old staircases outside the houses leading to the upper storeys are rich with carving; and between the fine colour of the old stone and the peculiar shapes, the most prosaic things have assumed an original look. The very market-baskets we speak of, lovely in shape, are exactly now what they have been from all time, as pictures dating from long ago testify.

Here, as generally on the Continent, the people have an instinctive knowledge of colour; and the vegetable-stalls make "still

life" pictures as they never do at home. Our vegetables are as fine, and our fruit very much better, but you never see the beauties so well displayed.

In the Dom-Kirche we saw the ancient huge-faced clock with the great rolling eyes, and can well understand the part it plays in the imagination of children. The eyes roll from side to side as the pendulum swings backwards and forwards, and have a most uncanny look, as if ceaselessly watching the congregation. But the Marien-Kirche is the church possessing really the greatest attraction; and as we entered, its interior was so unlike that of any church one has seen before, that it was impossible at first to do more than stand and take in, as far as we could, the general effect.

Multitudes of huge white figures, with outstretched wings, and all over life-size, seem to fill the air, and the forms are so spirited and so good that the effect is admi-

rable. Except a small amount of gilding, everything is either black or white—the old oak carving being black with age, and black paint having assisted to conceal modern repairs—and the contrast makes the white figures stand out beautifully. All round the sounding-board of the pulpit, all along the gallery, these figures are perched, blowing trumpets and playing musical instruments. It has the effect of making you feel as though you were surrounded by spirits of the past. Here is also the great astronomical clock, with its procession of figures; and we saw them perform their funny little nod, and walk round in the oddest and most jerky manner, as if they were out of temper with themselves and every one else. Two pictures by Overbeck are, like all his, fine as compositions, cold in colour, and very stiff. Here is also one of Memling or Hemling (we put both names because we once heard two German ladies insist that they were two distinct people);

but the Lübeck picture cannot be compared to those at Ghent, Bruges, and elsewhere, though, of course, the people of Lübeck are very proud of it. The famous "Dance of Death" (not Holbein's) is quaint, and under each figure come appropriate verses in Low German. When Death comes to the new-born child in the cradle, it answers :—

"O Dod, no schall ik dat verstahn?
Ik schall danssen un kaun nich gan."

(O Death, how shall I understand that? I am to dance, and I cannot yet walk.)

There are quantities of very old pictures in this church, but none of them of any merit, and no one knows anything about them. We had the sacristan by way of guide, but he knew nothing about any of the pictures himself, and seemed surprised at its being a matter of importance to us. If Lübeck becomes a place frequented by tourists, how many things might be invented about the churches? Surely Barbarossa's history would furnish many hints.

The old room of the Merchants' Company is very curious. It is panelled all round with alabaster panels in relief, and the subjects are extraordinarily mixed together, not to say irreverently. Some represent Christian subjects—from the Garden of Eden to the Nativity; and close to these subjects come mythological ones—as usual, neither particularly refined in idea nor execution. We saw the room of the Shipowners' Company, with the models of ships dating from centuries ago; but as the room in question is used as a restaurant, and was filled with tobacco-smoke, we were glad to get into the fresh air again.

In the churches we saw no one, in the streets very few people; and we asked if this absence of life was characteristic of the place, or whether it was an accident. An old lady, who spent some years at Lübeck, told us afterwards that when she first went there, she felt as if she was to be buried alive: the extreme stillness of

the place was quite terrible to her. She had come from a cheerful little town not far from Cologne, and the feeling of deadness was dreadful. Afterwards she got reconciled to it she said. We felt that it would be difficult to reconcile ourselves to existence there. It was a relief to go down to the quay, where many Danish ships were unloading and some bustle was going on—only in a modified form, it is true. It was interesting to notice the marked difference between the Danes and Germans, — the Danes were so fair, blue-eyed, and gentle in expression; the Germans looked so much more fitted to battle with the world. We had a great wish to go on board one of the Copenhagen boats and go across—a wish we hope one day to realise; and as it was quite impossible to be in two places at once, and we had to go elsewhere, we consoled ourselves by going into a Danish shop, and buying all manner of things, as the next best thing to do.

It is perhaps here that we had better note down an amusing mistake we heard one of our country-people insist upon. She was talking of Schleswig-Holstein, and Hamburg and Lübeck in particular, and she said: "Nothing surprises me more than to find how completely they are Germanised now. No one would believe that up to a few years ago they were Danes." Now they never have been, strictly speaking, Danes. They have always spoken German, and the best German: but formerly they were Germans under the protection of Denmark; now they are under the protection of Germany. And a great number we met, while retaining the strongest affection for the Danish royal family, feel that the present is the natural course of things, and are prouder of the Fatherland, perhaps, now that they more entirely belong to it, than they used to be, in spite of the old struggle and troubles which have now passed, or are

passing rapidly, into the traditions of the past. But nowhere is the past more vividly present than in the quaint and beautiful city of Lübeck. Every one who can should go there and judge for himself.

## CHAPTER VI.

### GERMAN OFFICIALS.

THE world went pleasantly with us in our quiet village; dulness we knew not; the simple pleasures around us were still more appreciated as time went on; we liked so much what we called the moderation of German life, using moderation in its best sense.

There was no wasting of long days to pay conventional visits, driving along a dusty road, to be glad to find nobody in, to deposit pasteboard and drive home again. The dinners were so much shorter, so much less conventional, and so much pleasanter.

But while giving the sincerest praise to

the ease of German country life, we must record our sense of the great worry which is caused by German officials—and German officials swarm.

We have, of course, a post-office; it is quite small, and, as the village is but little, the work must be also small. Yet there are two postmasters; a big postmaster, who is big in all senses of the word, with a big person, a large voice, and much politeness —and a small postmaster under him.

The big postmaster is a man with a gentleman-like and even an imposing air, and everything about him carries out the idea of size; he has a large dog and a large pipe, and he has much tranquillity. You appreciate his bows and his civility, till you find that his ignorance of everything out of his own small kingdom is on the same great scale, and that he does not know anything he ought to know, and can answer no single question put to him. Telegrams from England are hieroglyphics;

he knows nothing about the weight of letters or parcels to foreign countries; and if an answer is desirable, he slides his fore-finger, armed with a nail of extreme length, up and down a printed statement, and is but slightly disturbed when you point out to him that he is looking at the Colonies and not at Great Britain. He has a feeling of ignorance which, however, does not make him unhappy, and refers to his subordinate, who has a grubbier hand and a longer finger-nail, and you see that, between them, they really know nothing about it.

An important letter goes wrong, and you prove that it passed through their hands. Is there any end to the official letters and documents you have to sign about it? Before your eyes are open in the morning you are asked to look at a paper, read it, remark upon it, and sign it; and when you are innocently going out you are confronted with another. From this small office they returned some letters to England, which I

waited for in vain; and though this, of course, was individual stupidity, the innumerable rules and laws about trifles must and does lead to confusion everywhere. Every one has some tale to tell about the loss of letters or parcels; and an old gentleman, who had property in almost all countries, told me that he never trusted an important letter to the post, but sent it by a private individual. It was, however, a great comfort that, in spite of our giving a good deal of trouble, we never met with anything but the greatest civility.

Now we could not help reflecting that, instead of blaming their subordinates, as they did here, had we been in France they probably would have blamed us, on the same principle that induces them in France to fine — not a coachman for running over a foot-passenger, but the passenger for being run over. *He* must have been in the way!

The innumerable rules and regulations

in all parts of Germany, which are so vexatious to strangers, account for the enormous number of officials everywhere. Travelling by rail, you see — even at the most unimportant stations—such a number of imposing-looking men in blue uniforms, who take life easily, are always civil, and who, we were told, get very little pay.

The truth is, that all foreigners who wish to reside anywhere abroad ought to make themselves acquainted with the rules and regulations, as very ridiculous things happen if they do not. A lady watered some plants upon a balcony in a certain town, and a few drops of water fell on the pavement. Within a quarter of an hour a police officer stood in her room, and she had the option of a fine or going to the police station.

A child standing at the open window idly filliped one or two little tacks that were lying on the window-sill. In a few minutes, a policeman, sword by his side,

arrived beside him like an avenging angel, and a fine was also imposed.

A lady with a child was watching a procession pass, in another town. The crowd pushed; and for an instant, to save herself, she stepped back on the sacred grass. She was not a moment there, for she knew how strictly going upon the grass is forbidden; but no excuse was allowed, and she was summoned and fined. The Saxon laws tell hardly upon strangers. A friend of ours sent his children to a tutor, who turned out utterly unfit for tuition, by reason of a most violent temper and a total absence of truthfulness. The gentleman gave him three months' notice and intended to remove his boys; the tutor sued him for a year's salary. There was no evidence for and against; but when the gentleman was leaving, this man was allowed by law to arrest his money at the bank and his goods at the railway station, because he swore that he was leaving the place "owing him money." Before get-

ting his money and his luggage he had to deposit the sum claimed in a court of justice. They took a year to decide the case, and finally gave it against him, because, as he had first intended staying two years in the place, the probability was that he had engaged the man! A lady, not intending to purchase, had to pay for a picture she had admired, because at another time she had, at the tradesman's request, written her name down. She did not know it was his order-book, and wrote it that the man might let her know of future pictures.

We heard hundreds of cases that put us on our guard; but the truth is, it is always better for foreigners to get a German friend to arrange anything of importance. Thanks to our doing this, we never had a pang, or a hitch, or a disappointment. The only thing we made a mistake about was our "furnished house" on first arrival.

I am afraid this is a dull subject, but there are little things useful to know. A

servant reported to the police as "engaged," requires more than a month's notice, and is registered. If occasion requires her or his earlier departure, wages and board-wages have to be paid. If you engage a servant as a temporary servant, you can part with her at a week's notice (as, indeed, she can you). Of course foreigners going for a short time cannot depend upon getting the best class of servants, but the higher pay and easier service makes them willing to go, and a very clean hard-working girl will go for twelve shillings a-month (Hamburg and its vicinity excepted—everything there is dearer than in England) almost all over North Germany. A plan which generally answers better than any others, where hotels are avoided, is to arrange with the landlady from whom you take your rooms to furnish you with service and food at a fixed sum, which is always very moderate. Your meals are served in your own dining-room; and generally your only feeling is surprise

at the quantity of things she is able to provide for you. You choose your own hours and are perfectly free. This plan is more generally adopted than any other when a family makes a stay of a few months, and serves to leave arrangements in the hands of those who are best fitted to undertake it, and to take all household cares off your shoulders. However, to return to our village.

Distinguished by a certain elegance was the house of two maiden ladies who had an English grandmother, and consequently a very kindly liking for English people. These two dear ladies were accomplished women of the world, and kept up a vivid interest in politics. Their father had been a very distinguished *diplomate*, and their lives had led them to brilliant courts and to many various countries.

It was touching to see the care taken of the elder frail sister by the younger, who was almost as frail! Going to sit with

them you stepped back into a page of history long closed. Turning over their albums you found letters, verses, and compliments from distinguished men of the past, but which brought you very near them. Goethe, Schiller, and Lessing had written lines. A little note of Lessing's about a dinner was as fresh as if penned yesterday. Tributes to the talents of their father and the beauty of their mother were there from celebrities hardly known out of Germany, and written with that flowery embellishment which, if amusing, has the flavour of an old-world sweetness impossible in this practical age. These ladies were so brilliant and so amusing that we catch ourselves wondering why they never married, in the hackneyed phrase.

But their romance seems to have begun and ended with their father, and they give you to understand that he was so charming and so devoted that matrimony had never tempted them. It was to them we were indebted for much varied information. It

was always delightful to *hear* real history; and, foreigners as we were, even we felt the difference between the polished German they spoke and German as it often is spoken.

We like them so much—almost all the more—because of certain firm prejudices they have against some of our manners and customs. Had they had *no prejudices* they would have been much too good for "daily food!" As it was, not a day passed that we did not admire and love them. They had such exquisite old china, such lovely *repoussé* silver vases, and such a collection of curiosities. To everything a history was attached, which led again to other histories. No one did we more regret than these types of bygone days when at length the time came and we had to leave our German village.

## CHAPTER VII.

### EXPERIENCES IN A PICTURE-GALLERY.

PAINTING lately in a certain gallery, shrouded from much observation by a large easel and an open door, it was a great amusement listening to snatches of conversation, various criticisms, and patronising remarks made as people strolled past. Certainly few places are better adapted than a picture-gallery for studying character.

Of the many who came there, how few there were who knew anything about pictures, and how very few who really cared for them! Many came there who never even looked at them, or who passed them by with an open indifference. The best

critics, with very few exceptions, were invariably the working classes. These openly approved or disapproved, and gave their reasons justly and without affectation, and excellent reasons they were. They had never read or been taught what they ought to see in a picture, and therefore they never tried to see what they could not see. Often, of course, subtle effects escaped them; but putting upon one side the finer distinctions, they appreciated with all the charm of a hearty appreciation which was real and not feigned.

Now many of the "superior" classes, including several *nouveaux riches*, came to see "air" in one picture, colour in another, and sentiment in a third. They did not quite understand what they wanted to see, but they did their best; and with the most amusing misuse of the terms or jargon of art, they managed to talk delicious nonsense.

Besides the funny criticisms, very amusing things were sometimes said. An impos-

ing-looking lady, leaning on the arm of a friend, and followed by a little footman she might easily have carried under her arm, paused to look at the picture of a shipwreck on a rocky Scotch coast. It was most beautifully painted; the colouring of the rocks, the cruel sea, with the transparent waves gliding back—everything was lifelike and terrible. This picture was close to where I was sitting, and every word she uttered I heard distinctly. "Too green, my dear—too green; no sea is that colour. The rest is good enough; but it ought to be good—the man went to Scotland on purpose to paint that shipwreck." Which certainly presupposes a foreknowledge of shipwrecks which might be turned to account!

Another lady looked gravely at a picture of Sorrento, and said: "It is very pretty, certainly, but I adore truth in everything; and those trees, they are certainly not German trees!" There was a most delightful boy who used to come often with his sisters,

and who was a very amusing child. His tongue never stopped, and his questions never flagged. He told me as much as I could not prevent of his family history, the virtues and iniquities of his various governesses, and of all the crimes and misdemeanours he and his sisters had been guilty of; of a favourite dog, and of its commonplace death of old age; and much about his paintings. He could draw ducks, but was supposed to fail in depicting turkeys. He now supposed that it was because he painted in water-colour; and as turkeys have a good deal of red about the throat, the red always ran into the black there. He made up his mind to try oils for the future. He wound up a long discussion by saying solemnly, "Perhaps all this time you have never seen a turkey!" He was quite delighted to be reassured on this point. I was very sorry when they went away, his *naïve* remarks and perfectly natural way of talking were so enlivening.

Many a quaint scene was enacted in the gallery. Disappointed people waiting for those who never came; disappointed people who found those that did come were not all they expected. Often the loveliest picture served as a pretext for two careworn men, who discussed an anxious moment together, while their heads were in close proximity, apparently studying the transparency of depicted shadows; lovers meeting in a hurry for but a few moments, and who surveyed a somewhat gloomy landscape while discussing the brightest and most unclouded future. All ages, interests, and classes were represented.

The artists who copied there were in their way quite as curious a study. How they generally ran down the pictures they were most conscientiously copying all the same! and how, while taking immense and undisguised pains to reproduce a difficult effect truthfully, they waved their brushes in the air and talked a little disparagingly of it,

and pretended that it all required no effort! There was one young woman who came there, apparently for the sole purpose of testing every one's patience. She was one of those people who, by dint of a certain audacity, contrive to get all they want out of everybody else. She was perfectly unscrupulous; she used everybody's time and she exhausted everybody's patience. She was entirely ignorant of everything connected with painting, and having had a few drawing lessons, found she had no talent for drawing, and therefore intended to paint; and she made up her mind to copy an old Dutch picture, which required an intricate knowledge of colour and great experience—more difficult, in fact, than many other pictures. First of all, how she tormented the men belonging to the gallery, and how she disturbed every one! there was a never-ending drawing about of easels. She persuaded the inspector to alter the hanging of the picture, and finally settled

herself where she commanded a good view of the staircase. She could see every one pass, and they could see her. Then she announced that she did not know how to handle her brushes, how to set her palette, how to do anything.

She made a very incorrect sketch, which she made one artist correct. Then she asked his advice what next to do, and put in a sky all wrong. She came and asked me to go and see it, which I did; upon which she calmly handed me her brushes and asked me to correct it. I think I should have done it had I not seen a gesture by an old painter who had spoken to me two or three times. He shook his head at me; and knowing that he was a man of real kindness and experience, I obeyed his sign and declined. Finding me hopeless, she went off to a young artist, whose painting was excellent, and who was in all the enthusiasm of a copy which was his first "order;" and, making evident use of my "unkindness,"

she got him to go and paint her sky. As he passed, the old artist gave a grim laugh. "He will grow tired of that," he said. "I have seen these things before, but we must all buy our experience." Having painted her sky, and given her a valuable lesson about holding her brushes and other things, she went on for a little while by herself, then she came and stood behind everybody in turn, and coaxed another artist to get her out of a difficulty with her trees.

Every day she victimised somebody, oftenest the unhappy young artist who had so kindly yielded to her request at first, and who came in despair to me about her. "My copy is for an approaching birthday," he said, waving his hand in the direction of his painting. "It must be done on a certain day, and the time is so short."

"Tell her so," I suggested.

"I have told her," he answered, "and she says she will help *me!*" and we both laughed.

"Decline assisting her any farther," I said; "it seems to me quite simple."

"I will," he said, firmly; "you shall see."

I did see; for over and over again she summoned him, and over and over again he went, remonstrating and refusing, and going all the same.

Stroke by stroke her copy was the work of other hands. When finished, every bit she had tried to do was carefully painted out by some one else; and it was with irrepressible amusement that I heard her say to a gentleman who was looking at it,—"It is my first attempt; I do not think it is so very bad for a first attempt," and she gave a conceited little laugh.

"Will she ever paint?" I asked my old artist friend.

"Never," he answered; "but she will probably sell pictures, produced on this principle. I have seen others like her; they always manage to get on somehow."

There were other characters in the gal-

lery, but none who interested us more than a tall, slight man, with a really beautiful facé, if a face can be beautiful without the slightest expression in it—nothing but a vacant stare of abject misery. Nothing seemed to rouse him; he painted assiduously always one picture—a copy of Correggio, a beautiful head, with a drooping mouth and look of sorrow in it.

A friend who knew something of him told us his history. He was rowing his betrothed, shortly before their marriage, on one of the Swiss lakes: the boat was upset, and she clung to him. In his struggles she was somehow struck on the head and sank; he was rescued, lay ill with brain fever, and never recovered the shock. He fancied himself her murderer, and that his hand had struck her. He used to sit hours looking at the picture which was said to be like her, and now and then paint a little, give a vacant look round, and then fall into his painful reverie again.

A friend looked after him, and he was quite gentle and harmless. We missed him after a time, and then read his death in the paper. Of course it was a merciful release, as he could (they said) never recover; but the sad blank look of his face was inexpressibly touching, and his bowed figure and wistful eyes haunted us for many a long day.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A MUSICAL GENIUS.

We have had an adventure — a real adventure; all the more delightful, perhaps, because it came to seek us, and we did not go out to look for it.

During warm summer evenings, when the cockchafers made themselves obtrusive if we went out, we used sometimes to put the fine wire blinds up, open all our windows, and have musical evenings. We noticed a young girl who came very often, and who sat some little distance off, as though she did not wish to intrude upon us, but who evidently enjoyed the music; and one evening we went and spoke to her.

We found that she was the daughter of a man who kept a restaurant in a village near us, that she possessed a great deal of voice, and had begun training for an opera-singer. Even in speaking she had a very remarkable voice, unusually soft and full-toned: but it does not always follow that a speaking and singing voice correspond; therefore we felt we had no right, without hearing her sing, to predict a future for her. She had a conviction, or rather a belief in herself, which certainly does sometimes lead to success, and we arranged to go over to see her, and to hear her sing. An additional attraction was hearing her brother, a child of six, play the violin. She herself was tall and fair, and evidently very ambitious, and talked very unreservedly of her musical powers,—one moment repeating the various favourable opinions passed upon her voice, and the next, showing that she was more anxious than certain of her success.

We went over one afternoon, and were received with almost literally open arms by the young Fräulein herself, and by her father and mother, who, without exception, were the very fattest people I ever saw. We were conducted through a room in which smoking and drinking were going on in a very mild way, through a very dark passage, a funny little kitchen, and finally into a very small bedroom, in one corner of which stood the Fräulein's piano. Perhaps never was a more unfavourable situation for hearing the voice of a future *prima donna.*

The first thing to do was to hear the little genius play his violin, but he was not forthcoming; and when at length he was captured in a neighbouring street, he was found to be in all the happy state of grubbiness consequent on the prolonged making of mud-pies.

Dirty and breathless, he was remorselessly scrubbed by his mother, and stood

looking at us evidently in the light of his natural enemies. Poor child! how often probably his games of play had been interrupted in the same way.

His first action, when told to play to us, was to dive headlong under the bed, from whence he was rescued by his heels, dragged out, put upon his feet, the violin put into his hands, and requested by his father and mother not to drive them to severe measures.

His father had meanwhile tuned his violin, and he took it with a despairing shrug of his little shoulders, and drew some fantastic chords on it. He certainly looked barely six years of age, as far as his size and figure went. His face was singularly old looking, fair, like his sister, with a peculiar forehead. His pale-blue eyes had not by any means the traditional sparkle of genius. His mouth was a mere baby mouth, and the only expression in his face was one of being much bored, and

of evidently wishing we were somewhere else.

After listening stolidly to various threats of a very terrible nature, to which he paid not the smallest attention, he seized his bow, and, giving his sister a funny little nod, he dashed off into a sort of prelude, with a strength of finger and a richness of tone which was perfectly marvellous. Then he began and played an arrangement of some airs from der Freischütz. I certainly never heard sweeter tones than those he managed to produce with his little baby fingers. The expression of his face changed: he played "Con Amore," and you could see that between him and his violin was a responsive and sympathetic chord.

In that small room, with the curious surroundings, his music sent our thoughts back to concerts of long ago, when those same airs, played by Allard, in Paris, taught us what the violin could do.

Hardly giving his sister time to find her

place, he then dashed off into a wild and eccentric Hungarian melody, playing like an inspired Puck, with a gleam of mischief in his blue eyes; raced the time in very impromptu style; and, finally, stopped with some full chords, taken with a decision and nerve which produced a most startling effect.

His "time" brought upon him a shower of reproaches from his sister and from his father and mother, to which, however, he seemed perfectly accustomed; and, indeed, nothing about this extraordinary child was more remarkable than the wonderful placidity of manner, and the phlegmatic and innocent expression of his face. If he lives, the world will one day hear of him. It seems impossible to say, without exaggeration, how much his music had affected us. There was a pause, and, fixing his eyes upon us, he suddenly walked across the little room and put his little hand into mine. It was an action which flattered me, from its being a sort of recognition

of my appreciative powers; and then he stood back again and played a *Volkslied* in a minor key quite new to us, with an amount of pathos and feeling beyond description, suddenly put his violin down, gave us a funny little nod, and vanished. His sister, who was only sixteen, but who looked much older, then began to sing. She had an unusual compass of voice, taking C and D in alto with perfect ease; but in the small room the vibration was quite overpowering. It was a magnificent voice, with a sympathetic ring in the upper notes; but at present, of course, unsteady, uneven, and wanting in practice.

Nothing could in its way be funnier than the way in which the fat father and mother sat, with folded hands, nodding their heads and looking alternately in our faces, trying to read our real opinion of their daughter's powers. Apparently they were satisfied, because, without waiting for us to express

anything, they began a chorus, explaining her musical bias from a child.

"She is meant for the opera," said the mother, "because it is not enough for her to sing to herself — she must have an audience."

"Yes," chimed in the father; "from the time she could speak she wanted people to hear her sing. Sitting on the table, she could join in choruses; but she liked best to sing solos."

We so honestly admired a really splendid voice, that the father and mother were satisfied. They began to tell us anecdote after anecdote about the various singers and their voices. It was quite evident that the whole family was bitten with the same enthusiasm.

Through the kitchen once more, and through the little room full of smoke and people, and once more into the fresh air. As we went down the street—so narrow

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that the sunlight could hardly creep there —we spied the little genius dirtier than ever, busily engaged making mud fortifications in the gutter. He gave us a funny little nod and a grave smile. When, and where, shall we meet again?

## CHAPTER IX.

### BERLIN.

It is always interesting to revisit Berlin, and note the changes Time makes there. The museum and *Treppenhaus* had long held forth great attractions to us; and we went there, arriving on a clear, bright, frosty day. If you believe Germans whose experience has given them reason to assert it, there is no place where the police are so numerous, so polite, and so well organised, and (curious anomaly) no place where thieves exist in such numbers, where they are so clever, and so impossible to detect. Every one has either personally lost something there, or has a quantity of well-

authenticated stories about those who have done so.

It will be a satisfaction to all the excellent people who prophesied evil to us to know that we also were robbed there—how, where, and when will always remain a mystery to us—and, by a most extraordinary turn of fate, on the last day of our stay in Berlin. We remained from nine o'clock in the morning till three in the afternoon, with exactly one mark and two groschens in our pocket; we spent one mark in telegraphing to a friend for an address which would have got us out of our difficulty, and, by a curious mistake, the telegram was answered to the place we had left, and not to Berlin. Besides this, a roll of very good painting-canvas and a new umbrella was taken out of my hand as I got out of the cab at the hotel door, by a man I supposed to be a waiter, who proved to be nothing of the kind. The police were very civil, very

friendly, but they said frankly recovery was doubtful, and they were right.

It was luckily our last day, and we had paid our hotel bill, registered the small portion of luggage we had not sent forward, and had our railway tickets safe; but there we were, having had coffee and rolls at 7 A.M., with two groschens in our pocket, expecting every moment a telegram which never came, and as hungry as it was well possible to be all day long.

We spent our two groschens on gingerbread, and divided it into three. I never had cared about gingerbread; but looked at as a delicacy, and taken when actually ravenous, gingerbread is so different! and we thought it absolutely delicious. Even with this disagreeable *contretemps* we enjoyed our last day. There is certainly no town one knows so beautifully clean looking, and possessing so many beautiful houses and open spaces,—such a general look of prosperity altogether. The

gallery of pictures is one of the most thoroughly enjoyable in the world. From its arrangements the rooms are so pleasant, and the space so great, you see everything under the most favourable auspices, in such a comfortable, not to say luxurious, way. The Spanish pictures in themselves are worth going miles to see; and though we knew pretty well beforehand what pictures we should find there, we had one or two pleasant surprises. The only exception we can take to the arrangement, is that we think it a mistake to have one room devoted to Madonnas — some good, some indifferent, and some extremely inferior. Some are so insipid, and the contrast of colour so great, that your eyes get bewildered, and you lose pleasure in those really worth studying when you see such a quantity together. It is difficult to recount one's impressions and experience of statues and copies of *antiques* without becoming very like a guide-book, or saying

what everybody has said before; but we want merely to relate our own impressions of things, and to give a slight sketch—every one may fill up from memory or from observation for themselves.

The thing that strikes every one so much on visiting the museum, and every other public place in Berlin, is that the perfection of organisation is to be seen there. You can see everything and get information about everything without being hampered with guides or rules, and without the perpetual payment of little fees. Another thing which is pleasant is that, whether inspecting the old Egyptian relics or modern things, if you appealed to the person present, he gave not only an intelligent but a pleased interest, and did his best to supply any information wanted.

There was a yearly fair going on in the large square near the *Treppenhausen*, and we walked up and down the many stalls and made friends with some of the country

people. Except that red petticoats predominated, costumes were not to be seen. Still the people looked tidy in their various purpose-like dresses. But the fair lacked merriment; it was very orderly, rather quiet, and even dull; we thought the quantity of policemen walking about quite accounted for this. One cannot have everything, and where everything is kept in such good order something is apt to suffer. All over Germany (in spite of occasional pats at individual characteristics), English people find themselves made very welcome; but in Berlin they are met with especial friendliness, and it was delightful to our loyal selves to find at every turn the unmistakable love all classes have for *our* and *their* princess.

We sauntered up and down "unter der Linden," which, with its many shops, made one forget that the lindens themselves are really still in their infancy; and as the marked prices in shop windows are generally a good test of prices, we felt that the

dearness which people complain of as one of Berlin characteristics was true. But when you have all the conveniences and comforts of life around you, you generally have to pay for them everywhere; and, besides the Court (which of course makes a great capital and centre of the place), so many immensely rich merchants live there, that prices are naturally high.

Music, painting, and art of all kinds, are generously patronised, and flourish; and, altogether, this is one's *beau ideal* of a great capital, where everything is on a grand scale,—where the rich have within their reach all the luxuries and comforts of civilisation, and where the poor are well cared for. Everything has been done to make Berlin a really fine town, and the drives there are pretty and cheerful; but once outside Berlin, it is impossible to see a country more devoid of interest. It is hideous—a flat sandy plain—excellent probably for manœuvring troops; but what a

quantity of dust they must swallow! and how broiling it must be in summer without a tree or a scrap of shade to rest under!

There is one thing to which we cannot give a word, save of condemnation. Nothing can be conceived more absolutely filthy than the cabs. They are divided into two classes. We got into a first-class, received a pompous brass label, and were told the exact sum we should have to pay. The cushions were so filthy that we got out as soon as possible, and found ourselves in another, if anything rather dirtier than the first. Now, where other things are so well arranged, why might not something be done about this terrible want of cleanliness? We submit to filth in London cabs because we are so bent on liberty that the cabs have a free right to be dirty if they please; but in Berlin every one is under orders. The cab-drivers are carefully and comfortably wrapped in fur, don their greatcoats by order on a given day, and give them up

on a given day, therefore the authorities might order cleanliness to be the rule; and yet no London cab can quite compare to the absolute dirt of the first-class at Berlin.

It was lovely frosty clear weather, and cold—and certainly the drivers do look very comfortable in fur capes and fur-lined coats; and we wished the poor shivering men at home were as well off. How often we have seen them with a wretched horse-rug thrown over their shoulders, soaking and miserable, and driven to the gin-shop for a little momentary warmth. Can this not one day be altered?

We had the pleasure of seeing various regiments pass, and they looked bright and soldier-like; but we missed seeing them do anything except marching, and we should very much have liked seeing them reviewed.

There was a very nice nun who travelled with us afterwards, and she had much to tell of kindly actions and unostentatious

generosity on the part of the royal family. She talked much about Berlin, but she said that there was one great drawback to it, and that it was well known not to be a very healthy place. This may or may not be, but in these days when drainage has become almost a science, it seems as if it would be not a little remarkable if any removable cause is allowed to mar in the least degree a town of which every German may well be proud; and the probability is that by this time any defective drainage is already under consideration, and that the same Government which has so beautified it will also take away from it any other reproach. Even in Berlin improvements take time.

## CHAPTER X.

### A VILLAGE CHURCH.

NEAR our village, but not near enough to be very convenient to the people, there is a church where, every Sunday, an excellent and enthusiastic Lutheran clergyman preaches to an unusually full congregation.

We always think that, to hear German to perfection, it should be heard in sermons or lectures. Conversation rolls upon few words comparatively, and heard oratorically in refined North German, the rich and sonorous language acquires new meaning, and each verse of the Bible comes before one with new force.

Standing there, his quaint ruff round his

throat, with a good deal of natural and dignified action, he brings Luther before us; and if we look round, there is everything to help us to carry our thoughts to old times — the decorations of the small church are so old and so extraordinary. When last touched it had belonged to one of the nobles, who had property and power in those days, and the artist has done his utmost to blend the figure of the lord of the manor with sacred subjects. A portrait of this great man hangs in the chancel. A round red face, with a look of conscious merit, and rather a good wig; and comparing the pictures on the panels of the gallery, the same face reappears over and over again. In a blue satin night-gown he is blessing Jacob; both have powdered periwigs on. In the distance you see Esau dressed like a French *chasseur*. In another panel the same round face is receiving the Prodigal Son, both also in wigs, though there is much difference between them;

and the lace ruffles on the prodigal's coat are torn and dirty-looking; so is the pink coat in which he is dressed.

Of course there was not the slightest irreverence intended; but it is extraordinary in these days to see what satisfied the religious feeling of the people in days gone by.

This church had once belonged to the Roman Catholics, and finely-carved stone effigies of mitred bishops are side by side with less well-executed figures of their Lutheran successors.

The crowded church is a contrast to other churches in North Germany. Sunday being their day of amusement, as in France, their visits to balls and *fêtes* all take place on that day, and the churches are painfully empty.

On a week-day we went to see the church, and found the good clergyman holding a Bible-class, and of course we sat and listened to his explanations, which were excellent; but the children never spoke, and when he

questioned them they hung their heads. Afraid that we were disturbing them, we crept quietly away. Speaking with him afterwards, he said that he always found getting answers difficult; and he further regretted the absence of the poorer classes, many of whom never go to church after their confirmation till their marriage, and only after that to a christening or the wedding of a friend. It is not their habit, and they do not consider it in the light of a duty. Of course to us it seems sad that they should deprive themselves of a comfort and support they must need; and going sometimes to a sick person, it was always wonderful to see that it never occurred to them to claim the services of their pastor, as in this country is almost invariably the case.

Once a-month babies arrived to be christened; and we admired the patience of the clergyman, as the mothers did not always come; and there was a curious ignorance as to the names in more than one instance.

The wedding service is very like the Presbyterian, and entirely in the hands of the clergyman, whose address was often a very minute detail of the duties expected from the wife, whom he often patted on the shoulder during the ceremony. The bride, if able to afford it, wears a black silk dress, a wreath of myrtle, and a small tulle veil, and black silk is the universal dress for confirmation of those who can manage it. One of the prettiest sides of German life is the family life. You see grandfathers and grandmothers, sons and daughters, with their children, all living together in great happiness and comfort, sharing each other's joys and sorrows, and interested in those small excitements which seem to ruffle domestic tranquillity without disturbing it. They are also much more interested in the outer circle of relationships than is usual anywhere out of the Highlands of Scotland. Nothing is more beautiful than the reverence and affection shown by the grown-up sons

and daughters towards their parents, and if this is sometimes more openly demonstrated than we in England are accustomed to, it certainly errs in the right direction. Grown-up men and women of forty will often wait long for advice on any important subject, and invariably follow it. A German father is a real patriarch,—he assists in all difficulties and directs the real life of the family; and the more one saw of the closeness of the ties which bound family life in Germany, the more one admired and liked it.

The mother—especially in upper middle-class life—is very much more occupied by her household duties than in England. Besides active superintendence in the kitchen, to her falls the making of fruit, soups, and sweet dishes. She personally looks over the linen, gives out everything, and does what is generally deputed to a housekeeper in England. She serves her family's truest interests—for the small fortunes in

Germany render economy necessary; but she is apt to drop behind in knowledge of what the world is about. However, she is recognised as the moving spirit of the household, and has her reward. Are there not some in England who think this superintendence beneath them? who abuse their cooks, and eat very bad dinners, and who ignore duties that are homely because they are homely? What a revolution they might make, and how completely they might change the aspect of affairs, if they would follow the example of their German neighbours!

## CHAPTER XI.

### EDUCATION IN GERMANY.

THERE is one subject more or less interesting to every one, and that is the subject of education in Germany; and it was a subject which naturally claimed our attention wherever we were. It is certainly impossible to give too much praise to the thoroughness, the system of teaching, and the manner of it, with certain reservations. I allow that, as regards myself, I did start with a prejudiced mind, and a great dislike to the teaching of our schoolboys; and, in particular, to the inexplicable loss of time (because such small results are obtained), and that I am of

those who do not see the merit of Latin verse.

But there were those amongst us who took a different view — who believed in Latin verses—and yet they too confessed that, comparing results one with the other, the German system, as far as teaching went, was in an immeasurable degree superior.

It is of course a presumptuous thing to give any opinion as to why this should be so, because so many people have thought and written on the same subject; but we always believed that two things mainly contributed to it. Latin is taught much more as a living language than it is with us, and there is one recognised system adopted everywhere. In this country Latin is a mere work of learning by heart, without the faintest interest being aroused. The very way a schoolboy has to construe makes nonsense of what he is learning. He takes no interest in it, and he learns little, feeling that it is useless, and he does

not believe in its being anything but "bosh;" and what is done to promote his interest, or to enable him to follow his work intelligently? He is probably caned, or thrashed; and there is certainly this to be said in favour of this method of proceeding, that thrashing is very much easier to nine masters out of ten than any explanation.

Not for a moment would we underrate or undervalue the learning or scholarship that exists in England; but it is one of the misfortunes of English schoolboys that a man is supposed to be a first-rate teacher because he himself is a good classical scholar, while in reality being able to teach can come but in two ways: it may be a gift from heaven; and it can be the result of learning how to do it.

It is in this—*in learning how to do it*—that the German teachers surpass us. Not only in Latin. Listen in any boys' school you like to modern languages, to natural

history, it is always the same: an interest in the lesson is given from the first, and this interest arises from the reality and the intelligence with which each step, each lesson, is put before them. Latin to them is no dry subject, and the lessons in it are not dull. And take any schoolboy, from any part of Germany you like, that we have ever seen,—he can write a Latin letter and read a Latin book as no average English schoolboy can do.

In teaching modern languages, from the very first, the boys have to pronounce aloud, and are from habit able to talk any language they learn more or less well. The experience of most people will teach them that, as a rule, foreigners are better linguists than their contemporaries here. This is because foreign languages here are so much taught by exercises; and those exercises are written. In Germany exercises are also written, but they have to be *said* aloud, and they are generally useful and to the

point. I had often heard an amusing story about English ladies who knew only Ollendorf German, but I never expected really to meet some as I did in an out-of-way part of Holstein at a very small station. Their luggage had gone astray, and they plaintively said they had learned German for several "quarters," but that they had forgotten almost all they knew, except "Who has got the shoes of my grandfather's neighbour?" which was not of much use to them.

The advantage of having one regular system is very great. At any school in this country every change of master brings a change of method. In Germany a boy may begin in Hanover and go to Dresden, and there would be no gap. Besides, we generally like what we do well; and knowing that they teach well, the masters have a cheerful wholesome liking for their work: they are in a good temper, and the stupidity of a boy is much more excusable in their

eyes. When they have made the majority understand, they are on good terms with themselves, and they know that at short intervals their work will be examined into, and they are altogether on their mettle.

But granting all possible credit to the teaching in Germany (of boys in particular), and its satisfactory results, would it not be possible for them to shorten the hours, and attend to some of those rules of health they so systematically disregard? Ventilation in winter in some schools is so bad, that it is only wonderful the boys retain their health at all; and their pale faces and sickly looks were easily accounted for. Proud of the attention their system of teaching has obtained, the Germans are overdoing it, as the more thoughtful of their professors allow. The hours are tremendously long; and the punishment for "restlessness" is being "kept in." During, in fact, the important years of their growing life, they get no exercise to speak of.

Gymnastics with a master, and sometimes without, and nine-pins; no cricket or races, or any sort of active games. It is not an unusual thing to see a lad of fifteen spending his half-holiday arm in arm with the good "mamselle," who markets, and mends and makes; supplements the mother's work; is always at hand, and never in the way. The spirit, the spring—nay, the pugnacity—of an English boy is absent. A rosy bright boy in tearing spirits, and looking as if the world was made for him—such a boy you never see in Germany. The professor of a large university told me that the enforced military service saves them; but German boys do not look as if they rejoiced in their youth; and we never watched a school turn out without feeling what a mistake is made.

In one school the windows were hermetically sealed with newspapers all round the crevices; but the fear of draughts is too deeply rooted in the German mind to be

easily dislodged. The weak eyes and short sight of so many boys is attracting the attention of Government now; and one reform generally heralds others.

Though the education is, we think, better than our own as regards boys, we were always disappointed in that given to girls;* while it had also the other great drawbacks of long hours, bad ventilation, and want of exercise. The teaching is so completely confined to Germany and German subjects, that any well-educated English girl joining a school in Germany will find her contemporaries doing the simple geography, history, and sums which form the routine of an English girl of eleven or twelve, and only German history, &c.

There is a large indifference to subjects in which Germany took no active part, which is perhaps natural, but which leads to a want of appreciation as regards the

* Unless those girls were destined to teach: these receive a better education, though still a very one-sided one.

deeds of other nations. For instance, at the Government inspection of a large girls' school, a question was asked as to why the slave trade had been abolished. A tall girl answered, without hesitation, that the opinion of the world was against it, and so it was put down.

We had fondly thought England had something to do with it; but the old inspector nodded his venerable head and said *Gut.*

The English climate was described as foggy, misty, and without any sunshine; but there are a good many foreigners who see the foggy days in London, and judge our climate from that one experience.

A German *Professorinn* giving a lecture dwelt on the absence in England of *any* old families, and made such a curious confusion about Wales, Scotland, and England, and their families, that I ventured to write to her, but found that she ignored everything except an assertion of Macaulay's,

and had no idea of the respectable ancestry of our untitled aristocracy. I could not help wondering what some of the old Highland families would say if they heard themselves described as "of yesterday," and the hundreds of good old English gentlemen who have a long pedigree without talking about it.

The truth is, that we owe to Germany a larger attention to the education of the people, and that what Scotland did before school-board days we admired without imitating. The middle-class education struck us as being much more thorough and less superficial than with us; but the education of girls of the upper classes cannot be compared to the education given in England, either at home or at first-rate schools, where an intelligent interest is given to universal history, and where the best masters and the best governesses combine to do all justice to an already carefully-prepared soil. This education has one

drawback — it is enormously expensive. Between foreign travel and guinea masters it is not every fortune that can stand the expense. But what we feel about boys is: what a perfect system it would make if German mental and English physical training could be combined.

## CHAPTER XII.

### DRESDEN.

THE time had come when we felt our village had to be forsaken, and, filled with regrets many will understand, we started for Dresden, refreshing our memories as we passed Berlin by a visit to the *Treppenhausen*, and a fresh acquaintance with each favourite picture, especially in the Spanish collection.

Arrived in Dresden, we found ourselves comfortably settled very soon, and quite ready to enjoy everything. The cold was intense, but we knew it of old and did not dislike it: as one of our party said, one likes winter to be winter. Thick snow lay upon everything; every four-legged animal draw-

ing anything had a bell—horses often two or three dozen; and the incessant peculiar sound of the innumerable sledges flying past, the hoarse warning of the coachmen, who always take for granted that pedestrians take as little notice of the bells as they do themselves, and whose shouts add to the constant feeling that you are in a foreign land,—everything combined to give one a feeling of exhilaration. Next to a good gallop, commend me to a sledge for raising one's spirits; even the horses seem to enter into the fun of the thing, and beasts with disreputable legs, looking as if they cannot be of the least use to their owners, get up quite a respectable pace, and actually begin to show off.

The two-horse sledges, like the two-horse carriages in Dresden, are first-rate, and we join in the amusement, prepared for anything. Our driver is civility itself, and these horses are straight-legged, and look like work.

After a few moments, during which we fly along at a deliciously swift rate, a sudden check occurs—one of the horses has lost his temper: he has a big ugly head and a Roman nose, and he kicks out furiously. Our driver assumes an innocent expression, and looks round slyly to judge of our nerves by the expression of our faces. As we were seated a good way from his heels, and the only person to whom injury was possible was the man himself, our equanimity is in no way the result of courage, but of the purest selfishness; but he is evidently impressed. We are much too happy to be in the least afraid, and join the throng going to see the skating in the *Grossergarten*—the mimic Hyde Park of Dresden — and feel delightfully Russian, and full of the most brilliant good-humour, as we go round the skating pond. Viewed as a sight, the skating is disappointing: there are no gay colours or picturesque figures upon the ice; and we remember the brilliancy of the

Bois de Boulogne too vividly to admire this; so we are soon tired of watching a kaleidoscope of brown, grey, and black, and drive onwards.

The tiresome horse, unimpressed by the sober good conduct of his fellow, again begins to play pranks, and his heels are once more sent flying. Till that moment we did not think of an upset; but on turning the corner, a decided difference of opinion occurred between the horse and his driver: he wanted to go one way and the coachman the other, and the result was that we found ourselves in an instant seated on a snow-bank, very much as if we had gone there of our own free will; while the driver and horses were all in wrong relations to each other in a heap of snow lower down.

We were scarcely shaken, so soft was the bed upon which we had been placed; but we thought it wiser to walk home. Our foreign experience had taught us always to

pay a driver before starting, and we had done so; but he was very indignant with us for declining his further services. We were walking away, when one of those officious Englishmen, who seem sent into the world for no other purpose than to try the patience of their neighbours, calmly said, in a very sententious tone, "You are happily safe; but this should be a warning to you not to jump out of a carriage, whatever happens; it is a very stupid thing to do." Judge what our indignation was! But I was afraid of speaking, I was so angry; and finding we took no notice of him, he went off to sympathise with the driver. We were lucky in not having lost anything. A friend in a similar case lost a valuable Indian shawl which she had in the carriage with her. She went within an hour or two to the police office, and the man, who was very civil, asked if it was valuable; and when she assured him it was, he said quietly, "*Then* you will never get it

back again — we never recover valuable things," shrugged his shoulders, and that was all!

Personally, or from description, who does not know the charms of Dresden,—the ease of life there; the open-air concerts, where a cup of coffee, costing twopence, is the only entrance-fee? Who has not probably passed through it and seen its gallery, its green vaults, and its antiquities?

The instrumental concerts are beautiful; and instead of the conventional guinea, a few marks admit you. The new opera-house is pretty; but though some of the German operas are very well given, the Italian are very badly done, and the salaries offered are too low to attract the best singers. It is always pleasant to hear good choruses; but those who expect to hear singing such as our frantic prices procure in London or Paris, will inevitably be disappointed. Allowing for this, it is pleasant to be able

to go without the trouble of full dress, and to pay only five or six shillings.

The only fault I found with the arrangement at the concerts was, that there were too many instruments for the size of the room; and if you happened to be at all late in getting places, you had the chance of being more deafened than pleased. I have still a distinct remembrance of a big trombone that aimed at my right ear during one of Wagner's marches, and very nearly annihilated it and me—and I was not quite the nearest. The most curious thing to see, if the objection to dense clouds of smoke can be overcome, is a *Rauch* concert—smoke concert. A room crammed with little tables, round which sit men and women—the men all smoking, the women knitting or working or eating, and listening to a sonata of Beethoven's, or a symphony of Haydn's, which seems such a curious accompaniment to huge glass mugs of beer

and the counting of stitches. A little nod of approbation at some particular passage shows they are listening all the same. The orchestra looks blurred and dim through the dense clouds of smoke, but soft violin tones creep through it all. The entrance price varies from 5d. to 1s.; and the shilling concerts are smokeless, and very enjoyable, in spite of the nasty smell of stale smoke naturally enough clinging to the place.

Dresden is not the best place to learn German,—first, because the Saxon German is not good; and next, because between four and five thousand Americans and English make it less possible to hear German always spoken; but nowhere in the world are better masters for every conceivable thing. There is a charming English church, with hearty services and the best and kindest of English clergymen; and first-rate masters do not ask a tenth part of what they do in England. But let no

one expect that in a winter they are to achieve wonders. German teaching is thorough, but it is extremely slow. They believe in no grounding but their own, and insist upon beginning from the beginning; and two or three months are given to getting into their way, and not in learning anything new.

There is one institution in Dresden we cannot say too much in favour of — we mean the Deaconesses'. Well known as these institutions are in France and England, and often as we had seen them, it struck us the one in Dresden is almost the best managed we ever saw. In a good space of ground there is a man's and a woman's hospital, with private rooms attached to each, to be had for a moderate sum—six shillings a-day—which includes medical attendance, nursing, firing, food, and, in short, everything. Nothing can exceed the cleanliness of the place and the kindness and attention of the sisters. One

very near and dear to us was nursed there; and we shall never forget the care and genuine interest taken,—so we speak from personal experience. Besides the hospitals there are a mother-house, sister-house, school, infant school, *crêche*, a training-school for servants, and a home for them; and then the church and parsonage-house, where the gentlest and sweetest-looking woman, with beautiful brown eyes and a soft composure of manner, acted as friend, sister, or mother, and was general comforter and help to all. There is also connected with these charities a boarding-house for the friends of patients in the hospital, or for ladies of very narrow means.

The most extraordinary part of the whole thing is, that there are no funds whatever to depend upon. Everything is kept up from day to day upon the faith of receiving funds to meet expenses,—*and these never fail.* The Frau Pastorinn said to me, "On Monday morning I never know where

the week's expenses are to come from; but they do come, and we have never once been without them." They are busy now trying to build a small incurable hospital in the country (having at present only a couple of cottages for that purpose), and a Magdalene house. They have a girls' school in the country, also under their management.

I was asked to be present at the annual dinner, and would not have missed the sight I saw for any consideration.

About one hundred and sixty of the deaconesses were there, with the pastor and his family, and I was the only stranger present. The dinner was plain and good. Between every course a hymn was sung, led off by the pastor, who had a very powerful voice, and taken up and sung in unison by the sisters, who, in the pretty little caps and black dresses, looked so fair and neat. Of course, among any sisterhood there are some who have joined more to insure them-

selves a home than from any particular vocation, and who are restless under restriction; but the majority are women who feel it their privilege and duty to work in this way. Some had been all through the war; and while I was in Dresden twelve went off to a far-away village in Russia to nurse people in a violent outbreak of black typhus, at six hours' notice. In the wards of their hospital the poor who were brought there, suffering from terrible accidents, could and did testify to the cheerful nursing they received, and to what is almost as valuable as good nursing—real and heartfelt sympathy.

# CHAPTER XIII.

## KINDERGARTENS.

EVERY one knows the name of *Kindergarten*, but very vague ideas prevail upon the subject in England; and I have been so often asked what they really are, that it is perhaps not useless telling what I saw of them in Germany.

Froebel, a German philanthropist, was struck with the wrong system pursued towards little children, and in particular by the way in which the restless movements natural to them were chidden and forbid. His idea was, to turn this natural love of movement to account, and, while giving the little fingers something amusing

to do, to help to make them active and useful. This he did; but this is only a part, and a very small part, of what he did, and what his system was. To enable him to benefit children he studied them, and established not only the children's gardens, but training-schools to supply them with children's teachers.

We went, by invitation, with Baroness Marenholz von Bülow (Froebel's friend and coadjutor), to a lecture and conference in a large training-school. We found about sixty girls, from fifteen to eighteen and nineteen, who were teachers, and had passed the particular examination, besides a few who were not yet qualified. The lecture was admirable. It began by stating that the first duty to a child was love—that love taught patience—and that no one was to rest content with showing love to children, but to do everything possible to draw out their affections. Truth and obedience were to be insisted upon, and

conscience to be guarded,—because all the world knew how easily this got blunted. The lecturer contended that self-control and self-reliance and self-denial can be instilled into very young children; and that the very youngest children are keen observers, and understand justice. Application for a short time could be made to give them pleasure, so as to give a practical lesson in usefulness. Through their affection for those near them they learn the higher love to God. The lecture was beautifully worded, and earnestly and simply given; and it was evidently felt and understood by all present.

The conference then began, and discussions upon various subjects connected with children followed; then came the vexed question of rewards and punishments. The girls were asked how they would act in certain cases, and the answers they gave showed how thoroughly they had thought out the subject. The minutest traits of

character, small faults,— everything was gone into, and the tender age of the children (who leave the *Kindergartens* when they are six years old) was dwelt upon.

Questions and answers were given with animation, and experiences related; and we felt that we were receiving many new lights on a subject interesting to all mothers.

Some time afterwards we went to see an examination of girls under training, and passed a very interesting and amusing evening. A few questions and answers passed first, and then a girl was called out, and asked how she would amuse children with bricks. She was soon at a low table, with three or four round her. We have often seen small boxes of bricks, but never had we thought so much could be made of them. A ruined castle was built, and a cottage; and, in the simplest words, a little story was told about these two buildings, which was interesting, and really told with cleverness. Then the children had to repeat this story,

which, in the repeating, lost its head and tail, and gained wings, as stories generally do. This over, another girl led the most lively games, in which every child had to take a part, and became a person of importance for the moment. Every toy used is the simplest possible,—a bit of string, a ball, a strip of paper, play an endless variety of parts; a pricking lesson was given; then came a child's symphony, which was irresistible,—a ship was supposed to sail, and the room was full of motion, pinafores becoming sails, and ropes were supposed to be pulled, to a capital stirring song,—and time went so swiftly by that we could hardly believe we had been three hours there.

We went to several *Kindergartens.* Each house did stand in a garden, which in summer is used. In winter they play in one or more rooms, but the rooms were not properly aired or ventilated, and were certainly overcrowded: these were, of course, in the people's *Kindergartens;* and we were told

afterwards that some rules about fresh air were to be enforced.

The children arrive at about nine o'clock and remain till twelve, and are received from two and a half up till six, when they have to go into the Government schools and begin regular school work. When they arrive, they stand in a row; off come hats and hoods at the word of command, and given to the teacher; round the room they go, clamping their little feet, and looking eager and pleased: they are then put upon a form before a table. They have each a little packet in front of them; a word is given, each packet is unfolded; another, and the work is taken out and laid on the table; the strips of coloured paper are slipped into a cleft-stick, and threaded in and out. The interest these babies took, and their delight when it was right! In a short time they were dancing round the room and throwing a ball from hand to hand. Then another work began: a card-board was *repousséd* with

pins, upon a leather pad; then more playing round the room, singing, and home. But whilst the baby-fingers are busy, little lessons of order, obedience, and docility are insensibly learned, and a sense of being able to do *something* which is so delightful to a child, and which an English nurserymaid as often as not will disregard by giving a bit of cloth and a *pin* to a child, and wonder it is not happy! as if any child possessed of all its senses does not know that the pin won't go through and will not sew. A child knows perfectly well it is being made a fool of.

I have heard objections taken to *Kindergartens* on the plea that any sort of regular employment is injurious to a young child. I confess I never could see the force of these objections. Children allowed to do something are far happier than those who require to be amused; the very energy with which a baby-boy will break an idiotic toy is a misdirected force. A child would far

rather help to make a toy than to break one, if he knew how; and to see an intelligent boy of four expected to amuse himself with a wooden lamb which jumps up and down upon a board to the sound of a wiry tinkle, has always filled me with amazement.

However, to return to the *Kindergarten* children, one of their "works" is moulding clay into shapes: they imitate fruits, and the elder ones are allowed to colour them. Whatever they do is well done and carefully done,—the filling in of animals on pricked paper with coloured thread which makes a cover for a needle-book,—whatever it is, they are allowed to see it to a conclusion, and the delightful satisfaction of completed work is theirs. Lessons of kindness and gentleness are also theirs. The expense of training teachers comes to £12 a-year. A very excellent addition is now being made, and nurserymaids are being trained how to carry a baby, and how to keep it; and they are also to learn the

common rules of health, and how much harm ignorance may do.

This is but a slight sketch of *Kindergartens*,—would that it may lead people to adopt them more largely, and to understand them a little, for some funny mistakes are made. A benevolent gentleman in a large town in England wanted to establish these *Kindergartens* at his own expense, and did establish one *for children of six weeks old.* What he expected from the babies we do not know; but, of course, he quite misunderstood the object of them. Another gentleman in Germany offered to endow one, on condition that three modern languages and music were taught by competent professors.

The whole system is meant simply to follow natural laws, and help what already exists to produce good instead of evil; to develop without straining the intelligence of children, and to lay the foundation, by the very simplest discipline, of that love of order and industry which will make their

lives happier and produce happiness round them.

Besides the games mentioned, one we have often seen played at home was much delighted in : a little shop was stocked with bits of real things, and the real prices asked and given, so that the price of the necessaries of life were known.

We saw many *Kindergartens* in different towns, always noting the cheerful merry look, and the interest the children took, and their sincere and unmistakable pleasure in their work; and we heartily wished that at any rate the poor in our towns had access to something of the kind. They are infinitely preferable to any infant-schools we have ever seen. In this country we are slow to adopt things; but we hope that the beginning now made will spread and become general, — their universal adoption can but lead to good results.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### GORISCH.

A MOST lovely spring morning saw us on our way to Saxon Switzerland; and nothing could have been more perfect or more enjoyable than steaming slowly up the Elbe. Against a strong current progress was slow; but, though there were people who grumbled about the slowness, we felt that, having no particular reason for being in a hurry, we should indeed be ungrateful if we did not enjoy the present.

At first, on leaving Dresden, the banks of the Elbe were monotonous enough. A few villas studded one side, and the scenery was pretty, but tame; but after a while

it began to change. Pine-trees came in sight; whole woods appeared; the banks rose higher and higher, and became rocky, till at last we were steaming past rocks, well wooded to the summit; and the few beech-trees that looked out of the dense firs were decked in that exquisite and delicate green which always seems to us a type of nature, unspoiled by the glare of the world.

Every now and again came breaks, which would have gladdened the heart of a geologist, because of their well-exposed and somewhat peculiar strata, but which, to our unscientific eyes, were chiefly beautiful because of their lovely tender grey colour, warmed here and there into a pale brown, and making a most perfect contrast to the intensely tall and intensely dark fir-trees. The scenery got grander and finer; but though the shapes of the hills are lovely, the splendid depth of colour and vivid contrasts reminded us then and always much

more of the West Highlands of Scotland than of Switzerland—the country which it is so much supposed to resemble as to be called after it.

It is a miniature—and a most lovely miniature—of Scotland. It has the rugged outlines of Scotch hills; but the growth of trees and plants is far greater and more luxuriant.

In Switzerland all is more immense and more majestic than in Scotland; but the spaces are too wide for deep shadows. Everything is more smiling and more verdant. Often, as high up as the eye can see, there is rich pasture-land, on which the friendly cows wander, tinkling their bells as they move about. Here, as in Scotland, pines gain a footing. Sheep and goats scramble up; but the rocks have no pasture,—and it would puzzle any cow, however active, to have a footing there.

The peculiar shape of most of the "named" hills makes them peculiarly in-

teresting to any one who has a taste for explaining the why and the wherefore of these formations. They seem to spring from the earth, and look at first sight so inaccessible that it is puzzling to imagine one's self surveying the world from the top.

We landed at Königstein, where an open carriage and a pair of the fattest white ponies we ever saw were in waiting. And here, *par parenthèse,* we must advise no person who is nervous or timid, or not accustomed to driving, to think of driving in any part of Germany where it is at all mountainous, or where the ascent and descent is at all steep. On the box—an evident makeshift, high out of all proportion with the rest of the turn-out—sat a boy, who might be thirteen or fourteen, but who looked twelve, and unhappy. He was very fat, and spoke in a plaintive, gurgling voice. He sat so high that, as the box consisted of four rods and the seat, we saw the ponies and the scenery between

his dangling legs. And we also noticed that his driving was purely experimental, and that when he pulled the right rein very hard he seemed much astonished at the result, and almost equally so on trying the other side. He wisely came to the conclusion that he had better keep his reins straight, which answered perfectly, as we met nothing on the road. We went up a very steep hill, and down another. The road on either side was wooded; but when the wood opened, as it did here and there, the beautiful stretch of blue country, diversified by rocks and woods, seen in the clear and rarified air to an immense distance, was a picture to remember all one's life.

We arrived at a most curious little village, to find it in its prettiest spring dress, —every orchard a mass of blossom, the bees making the most of their harvest,— and drove to the door of the one hotel, where we had engaged rooms.

Everything was clean and fresh; and we had the place all to ourselves, as it was considered much too early to enjoy life so high up.

From a window in the long, low drawing-room, with a balcony, we saw, straight over and down, the stretch of country we had driven up, across to Lilianstein, one of the independent hills we have spoken of, rising from the plain quite abruptly. Its rocky sides took a thousand colours from the setting sun. The air got very cold, but had the perfect and exhilarating feeling of all pure Highland air. It was much colder than in Dresden,—so cold still, that many of the children had not laid aside the masks they frequently wear in winter, and which give them a most absurd look of little stage demons.

We went to bed feeling delighted with what we had seen, and with what evidently lay before us. Can anything be more enjoyable than to be in a new and delightful

country without any drawbacks, and feeling able to walk or drive or ride in any direction, and know that all directions will be beautiful? We resolved to be up very early, and have a long walk before breakfast.

Next morning we woke with the guilty feeling of having broken a resolution. Though silence and stillness reigned in the house, outside the world was evidently not only awake, but exceedingly active. We fancied we were late. The faint smell of inevitable tobacco came through an open window. At all events, workmen were at work. We looked at the family watch (a watch with the best possible character, and which "never goes wrong"). It must have stopped, or the climate must have affected it in some way, for it pointed to 4.15. Sleep, however, was impossible. The loveliest and rosiest light lay upon everything — touched the projecting crags of Lilianstein and the tops of the trees; and

we had a fresh perception of what is called the "breath of morning." As everybody was awake out of doors, we dressed and went out too, and took the first opportunity of asking what o'clock it was. Not quite five, and they were all busy at their work already. This was "getting up with the sun" with a vengeance. We were offered some new milk; and with a haunch of black bread, and that sense of satisfaction which makes early rising invariably appear to be a virtue in one's own eyes, we went along the road up the hill.

The name of the village is Gorisch; and we feel that to those who do not know it, we are doing them a kindness in telling of it; while those who do know it, and have been staying there, will allow that we give no exaggerated description of its many beauties. On one side of the road the ground continues to rise; on the other it falls abruptly; so that soon the tops of the trees stand beneath us, and the lovely

valley spreads out, merging into the tenderest shadow, through which, this morning, the sunlight was gradually stealing, with the clearest and most perfectly golden light possible.

Under the trees, and making a carpet unlike any we had ever seen, were millions of the hill blaeberries, last seen and last picked on Scottish hills. But there the plants are small; here they were giants, standing in places two feet high and more, —and the brilliant green, covered with threads of gossamer and touched with a sparkling dew, was wonderful. After walking much farther than we intended, we saw an inviting footpath, leading to an immensely high rocky hill; and, without pausing to think of what the rest of our party might say to our absence, we steadily began to climb. Once on our way, it was impossible to return, each step showed so much beauty,—and at every turn we took we fondly hoped to reach the top. It cer-

tainly seemed a long pull and a steep pull; but at length we stood on a huge irregular stone on the summit of Papstein, the second highest hill in Saxon Switzerland.

What a lovely world we looked down upon, and what an immense distance we could see! On one side, the flat lands, with Dresden (twenty miles off); on the other, Bohemia, and endless woods and hills. Below our feet we saw the steep crags, covered with pine-trees, wherever that tree (so modest in its requirements) could have a footing. But these pines have one beauty our Scotch pines have not. The great buds—usually a light brown or yellow, which crown the branches in Scotland—are here, as in the Alps, a vivid flame colour, and stand out against the rocks splendidly; and they are very large, and make a really fine show.

As we sat and looked over all this beautiful corner of the world, the sun, so long sending a foreshadowing of its coming

brilliancy, suddenly rose triumphantly above the clouds, through which it had been shining, and flooded everything with the exquisite morning light.

How we enjoyed that walk and that morning, and how ravenously hungry we were as we went down the hill! Judging by our feelings, the bread and milk had been devoured only in a dream, and we must have been walking many hours. When we got home we found we had, in reality, been absent about three hours and a half. It was then 8.30, and breakfast was ready, which we welcomed as only those can welcome it after such a walk and in such air,—and it was delicious.

Excellent coffee, with milk, fresh eggs, very brown bread and little rolls, good butter, and other things. Our host's only distress was our want of appreciation for large smoked raw sausages which he had received from Westphalia, and which he thought the greatest delicacy he could

offer. He never quite got over this fatal difference in taste, and often tried, good-humouredly, to argue the point with us; but certainly he studied to please us, because, though offering us what he considered delicacies, he had always a dish he conceived to be English as a substitute. Seldom were we made so thoroughly comfortable as we were in that quaint and lovely village.

# CHAPTER XV.

## AN ADVENTURE.

PECULIAR to Germany, and especially to Saxony, is the shape of the dormer-windows in the cottages; and we have never seen it carried to a greater extent than in Saxon Switzerland. These windows are exactly the shape of a human eye, and stare out of the red roofs in a manner which endows the houses with a most extraordinarily human expression. When two windows are there you feel it is all right; but when only one appears, and seems to brood down upon the world below, as though it were thinking of its past, its present, or its future, it has, to say the

least of it, a very "uncanny" look, to use an expressive Scotch phrase.

One of these windows was exactly opposite our rooms, across the court; and in the morning, when the sun shone upon it, a white pigeon or two invariably sunned themselves in its black centre, and gave the speck of light which adds so much expression to the human eye. The effect was very absurd. The eye positively seemed to move at a little distance, and it was a constant amusement to the children.

Never, perhaps, in so small a space, were so many animals gathered together. Besides the white ponies there were brown ones; and there was a brown horse — a tall, ill-made animal, with very straight shoulders and very thin legs, which was called a lady's horse, and which we heard was in great request later on in the season. There were two donkeys, several goats, many cows, pigs and sheep, dogs and cats, of course, and pigeons without end. Of

course, had it been a farm there would have been nothing extraordinary in this collection; but in a farm there would have been some provision made for their accommodation, while here the whole happy family lived in the smallest conceivable space—donkeys, goats, and ponies in the same stall; and as they each had their little tempers, the noise at times was anything but musical.

Besides these animals, the superior intelligence of these primitive people had taught them the lesson we are so slow to learn in England, that singing-birds do more good than harm, and they had done all they could to attract them. Nests in miniature cottages were fixed into most of the fruit-trees; and though people might imagine that the fruit suffered to too great an extent, it really was not the case. The birds eat their share of fruit, but they eat insects and the embryo, cockchafers, and grubs of all kinds; and having witnessed in

France the result of having destroyed so many small birds, we agreed with them entirely, and only wished some of our friends at home would take this sensible view of the matter.

Their theory is, that the fruit being thinned, is really also finer. At any rate, the enjoyment to us was great. Encouraged to remain, the birds hardly knew what shyness meant, and showed off their airs and graces close to us, chirped and sang, moving their heads from side to side, and, contemplating us quite near, we felt as if we had hardly seen birds before, remembering the shy flight at home, as they start hurriedly out of sight.

One morning after breakfast we resolved upon an expedition to Schweizermühle, a watering-place about two hours' drive from us. We had some slight misgivings when the small fat boy again appeared, and we heard the portly landlord giving him such instructions as he was capable of giving

him about turning corners. We distinctly overheard him say that, as he was so inexperienced, he had better avoid the *Treppe*. Now, as the only translation we knew was staircase, we were much puzzled, and tried to make out from the boy what it meant. Absolutely in vain! We could get nothing out of him!

After driving up the lovely road, where I had walked one morning, we turned along a much worse and very narrow path to the right, then suddenly down one of the steepest roads I ever remember seeing. It got worse and worse,—no road in the wildest part of the west of Scotland could equal it. We seemed to stand upright. The boy for the first time held his reins in one hand, and held on tight to the box with the other; and we *felt* he shut his eyes. The ponies scrambled down in the most extraordinary way—as often as not they were sitting on their haunches like dogs; and how often they slid we could not count. We offered

to get out; but the boy asked, with a malicious grin, if we were afraid; and in reality stopping was out of the question. At length we arrived at the bottom, and in a few moments seemed entirely shut out from the world, and in the midst of a most extraordinary scene.

On either side of the narrow valley we were in rose abrupt hills, to so great a height, and so completely clothed with fir-trees and pine, that you saw nothing of the sky save a small strip overhead. Enormous masses of grey rock had in past ages tumbled half-way down these hills, and were now clothed with miniature firs; while on the sides grew a vivid yellow moss, so absolutely like gold, that it made a dazzling spot of colour wherever it appeared. We have been told by many Germans that this beautiful moss is peculiar to Saxon Switzerland, and has never been found elsewhere; and we have never been able to disprove it.

The road along which we were going followed the course of a stream, and was made of trees simply felled and laid down side by side. We bumped very uncomfortably. For a long time it never occurred to us that we were in reality making an experimental trip, and that the boy did not know his way, and we did not feel at all anxious or uneasy: the scene was so new, the air so delicious, and the size of the trees so wonderful, that we had no room for misgivings. Let no one think he knows what pines and fir-trees are till he has been in a German forest; and in Saxony, the immense height, the absolute straightness, is a thing to be seen before any description can do them justice. We have seen fir-trees all over Scotland—and some silver firs looking grandly over a bay rise vividly before us, in remembrance, as we write this—but we never saw trees to compare to these; and we felt we could only then realise what German poets mean when they compare

all beauty that is tall and straight to a *Tannen-baum.*

But even the beauty of the fir-trees, and the charm of going through scenery utterly new to us, did not prevent our beginning to feel anxious, and we asked the boy where we were. "God only knows," he answered; "I do not."

Here was a situation! We ought to have had a pocket-compass; we ought to have felt sure of our driver. This, of course, is what every one may say; but we had evidently neglected all these "oughts," and here we were, with an unhappy boy, dissolved in tears, and not the faintest idea of how to get out of our difficulty. Not a sound was to be heard save the sound of nature — a little rippling sound made by the brook, the tapping of a few woodpeckers,—nothing else.

Going back was hardly to be thought of, the way was so long and the hills so steep. Taking hasty counsel, we resolved to leave

the carriage down below, entreating the boy to let the ponies have a little water and a bite of such grass or moss as they could find; and bestowing a biscuit upon him, we resolved to go up to different hills, feeling sure that if we only got high enough up, we should see the country lying like a map below us. But the sides of the hills looked so steep, that we were all the same a little afraid that before we reached the top, we should be benighted. After scrambling up a hill which seemed to grow in height as we went up, and absolutely knee-deep in blaeberry roots, at length we reached the top; and if we had toiled for months instead of hours, we should have been repaid. At the risk of being scolded for word-painting, we must try to tell a little of what we saw. We looked over a stretch of forests, hills, and valleys, not only beautiful and picturesque and most lovely in point of colour, but rendered exquisite by the glow of a sunset quite un-

equalled in our large experience of beautiful sunsets. Whether the rarity of the air gives these colours some additional beauty, or from what reason it is, we cannot say, —it is impossible to attempt to give any scientific reason for it. We can only say that such wonderful crimsons and purples, such deep gold colours, we never beheld before. All upon one side the heavens were in a flame; then came a rosy reflection; while the splendid landscape below seemed almost to float in a page of transparent colour. We felt as an old woman did in a delightful Highland story, that on such a night "heaven is but a step."

Beautiful as it was, and solemn as nature's grandest scenes invariably are, we had to go; and seeing some small figures in an open space upon the other side, we moved down towards them. On speaking to them, we found them almost impracticable,—they knew the name of no church or village, and seemed hopeless. At length, by turning

the question the other way, we arrived at knowing something. If we go along that way, we asked, pointing to a road a little better than the rest, shall we come to a church? "Ja," they chorused. You do not know the name? "Nein," again they cried, altogether. So we went back to the carriage, and, after some trouble in turning between two such high banks with a carriage that had no idea of turning *short*, we pursued our way in semi-darkness, and arrived at a village. Here we stopped and had some very thick, very bad coffee, rested the ponies, and got to Schweizermühle by the light of a most glorious moon.

We were quite prepared to have to find some other way of going home; but the fat boy, much revived by a supper in which beer played an important part, insisted, with more energy than we had believed him capable of, that the ponies were quite able to take us home; and as we supposed he knew his own business best, we once again got

into our little carriage, and drove home along a very smooth road.

As we got once more near Gorisch, about 1 A.M., the little fat driver faced round suddenly and said, "What are you going to tell the master?" We were a little startled; and evidently alarmed by our hesitation, he wept plentifully. "I could not help it," he said; "I am from Thuringen, and have only been here one fortnight, and I shall get such a beating!" We endeavoured to reassure him; but we were relieved to find on arrival that the whole household had gone to a dance in the neighbourhood. The boy got the ponies into their stables. We were all sound asleep before any one returned, and no questions were asked. I confess my conscience pricked me severely when I saw the poor ponies in the plough next morning, and rejoiced that twenty-four hours of heavy rain gave them the rest they must have needed next day.

Our next visit to Schweizermühle was

very prosaic; but, even in broad daylight, we admired it; and the immense hotel and crowds of visitors made us prefer the superior retirement of Gorisch. Besides, the one lies in a hollow, and has no view to speak of; while the other is very high up, and has all the advantage height gives in the way of clear air.

We went, of course, to the Bastei, and Schandau, and many other places. The prettiest little place is one called Herrnkretchen, just inside the borders of Bohemia, though the big and small hotels are too much shut in, we thought, to be pleasant in hot weather. There are countless walks, drives, and rides about, up very steep hills; and the woods are quite full of lilies of the valley.

It is curious to notice how immediately the character of the people and the colouring changes. In Saxony the people are proverbially plain, sandy-haired, and wanting complexion and colour. The moment

you get into Bohemia you see dark eyes and vivid colouring, and notice much more liveliness. In this little village there is a stream which runs through it into the Elbe, and the number of boys and men fishing told a flattering tale of trout. Being offered a dish of trout, we gladly acquiesced, to find that each little trout, weighing about half a pound, was charged 1 mark 50 pfennige (about 1s. 6d.); and a small dish, 5 marks 60 pfennige. This was the only extravagant thing in the place. The food was plain and good, the rooms very clean and neat, and living altogether, including board and lodging, cost only 5 marks a-day —the trout being an extra; and it seems that, though plentiful, they are in such demand that they are sold for great prices all along the Elbe, down to Dresden.

The people here were very primitive. They wear bright-coloured handkerchiefs tied over their heads, have bare arms, and walk barefoot. In the evening all the

fathers take the little ones out whilst the mother prepares supper. It looked quaint to see a procession of men all carrying babies and dragging others by the hand. The men are mostly quarrymen or wood-cutters; and the muddy Elbe is bordered on each side, as far as the eye can see, with the felled trees, which are made up into rafts, fastened together, and sent down the river,—as often as not with small huts on board, in which whole families live. We have often noticed babies playing on these rafts so dangerously near the edge, that we expected constantly to hear a splash and a cry for help.

There is a very curious little Roman Catholic chapel at Herrnkretchen, and the village has only one Protestant family. The German sounds so funny, especially the *platt Deutsch.* As among all primitive people, the greatest kindness seems to prevail; but the more we saw of all other places, the more we remained in love with

Gorisch,—not only the air, but the more open country, and the absence of fashionable life, was so pleasant. There were some delightful old women we saw sometimes, in the evening, in front of their cottages; and, inspired by a wish to carry off a likeness, we asked our host to try and get us the ugliest old woman he could find, and one who possessed the greatest amount of wrinkles. Much to our amusement, almost all the old women in the village presented themselves, and we picked out one who was nearly eighty, whose skin was a rich yellowish brown, and who was a mass of wrinkles. The picture turned out a success, and we had the very greatest difficulty in persuading her to let us keep it. "Why should you care for it?" she mumbled; "my family would value it far more!"

Only when we found ourselves once again in the boat going to Dresden did we feel quite sure that in some manner she might not get hold of this picture. One result of

her sitting was that she persecuted many people afterwards in hopes of their also doing her picture; and we heard that she became known in the village as "the Englishwoman's old lady."

Gorisch used to be famous for its whey cure, and goats are still there; but the recognised merit of the place is its bracing air, and in summer a great many people flock there. But in spring, when the young green is out, and blossoms stand thick upon the trees, it is solitary, unfrequented, and charming; and we can safely say that having been there is a pleasure to remember always, and that standing on one of its hills gives you almost a new sense of what scenery is; for at that height the colour of the Elbe is lost in the distance, and you only see the moving mass of water which gives the life and movement without which the loveliest landscape in the world seems tame.

Besides the hotel, there are a good many rooms to be had in the little village more or

less reasonably, and walks and drives in every direction. The only drawback we know is that, having once been there, an irresistible longing comes over one to return, as we some day hope to do.

# CHAPTER XVI.

## OLD CASTLES.

WITHIN a few miles of Dresden is the old *Schloss* of Moritzburg, famous as having been a favourite and petted residence of Augustus "the Strong" of Saxony, and as still retaining a breed of wild-boar.

One of the many pleasant things in Germany is the certainty of the weather. If it makes up its mind to rain, it does rain with a vengeance; but it looks like it for long beforehand, and people must be foolish if they start upon any expedition in the face of a gloomy and sullen day, where the clouds hang low, and look as if they had shared the contents of a

gigantic ink-bottle between them. It does not pretend it is going to be fine, as it does in our more treacherous climate, and change its mind quite suddenly, to the detriment of bonnets, &c. The consequence is, that in no country are picnics—or *Landpartie*, as they are called—better arranged or more successful than in Germany. One lovely May day saw us *en route*. We knew a good deal about our share of provisions; we had confidence in our friends; and we followed in the wake of several open carriages—not going fast, it is true, but quite reconciled to the jog-trot of the fat-looking horses, who always take life (even uphill) so easily. Not a pretty country till we got near Moritzburg, where some magnificent poplar-trees, limes, and then a pretty wood, with a rich undergrowth of broom in great beauty, made us indifferent to the steep ascent of a hill, which tested the wind and power of the horses. Arrived at the top, the first thing we saw was a

lake, which is quite a curiosity in point of colour—such a lovely deep rich blue. How difficult it is to avoid the crime of word-painting with such a lake taking by surprise! As it lay before us, fringed with trees (the old castle looking as like an old Scotch castle as anything could look), with pretty weeds flowering over it here and there, and a good many wild-fowl, it was very homelike to us all, except in colour, —and certainly no Scotch or English lake ever looked so like the blue sea as this one did.

How shall I confess all my ideas and hopes and expectations about the wild-boar! To see one at a good distance off, gliding from one dense thicket to the other, and to feel, perhaps, that a nervous person might have been afraid, but that, not being nervous, we were not afraid! At all events, we felt comfortably sure that there would be strong fences, and that danger was not; only, perhaps, ex-

citement. . . . How shall I recount the reality! We were invited to go and see the wild-boar fed, and never was there such a sinking in poetry. A young gamekeeper walked round an open space of ground guiltless of grass, and clumsily hurrying up from all round came the animals. Till I saw them, I had regarded the wild-boar, depicted occasionally in a coat-of-arms, as an animal almost as fabulous as a unicorn. Now I saw these wonderful creatures must have been closely studied from nature . . . at Moritzburg. Their backs were a complete arch, their snouts were interminable, and they had long legs, so ridiculously weak-looking in proportion to their gaunt frames, that when they hustled each other along, it seemed an even chance whether they were knocked over or not. There was not even the ghost of a paling between us, and we walked amongst them without their being at all disturbed. How they grunted and gobbled, and how

exactly their manners resembled their farm-yard brothers!

The only part about them in the least like what one expected to see was the colour—a deep brown; and the coat was very rough and shaggy. Still, when one reflected that these tame-looking animals are fed, and allowed to stray into the woods, where they afford the royal sport of a "wild-boar hunt," one's ideas of the thrilling dangers of that royal sport became considerably modified.* We were told that there were three hundred there, but there certainly did not seem more than one hundred and fifty collected together. There is something about Moritzburg which is excessively interesting. The old banqueting-hall, still used, is an immense room, and has a collection of malformed deer's horns from Hungary, Austria, Sweden, and other places. A huge wild-

* In some parts of Germany and in Austria there are real wild-boar.

boar's head grins as if in mockery at his degenerate descendants; and, though some very curious feather tapestry is the only thing to see very interesting or very wonderful, there is a look of antiquity and splendour—a sort of departed grandeur—which clings to it. It is a place where we never for a moment seemed to forget the traditions of a very interesting time in Saxony. The views were lovely from all round the place, and pictures of gay *fêtes* on the lake beneath were repeated more than once, both in the castle and in a small miniature palace at a little distance, which takes its name from the old nobleman who built it, Marcolini.

Nothing in its way is more curious than this small place,—the rooms all so wonderfully small that it is like a toy, but a very pretty toy. Some of the walls are hung in embroidered silk, every atom of colour having faded out of it. In one room this is replaced by bead-work, which must have

taken a generation to work; in another the feather tapestry is repeated, — but though the dyes are still good, it is not really effective. In one small room wood tapestry of a most uncomfortable octagon pattern made everything look crooked. The little palace had altogether a forlorn look; there was something sad in the appearance of departed glory, which Moritzburg had not. In a bedroom an enormous number of flies were cleverly painted on the wall—a practical joke, in consequence of a complaint made about the innumerable flies by some princess who stayed there once upon a time. There is a pheasantry without any pheasants, and some enormous boxwood hedges, cut and trimmed to form the initials of the names of Augustus the Strong, who did so much for Saxony and Dresden. We sat down in the park to eat our luncheon and to rest; and we were very merry, and enjoyed ourselves in spite of having a fellow-feeling for the princess

who complained of the flies, for never were more to be seen!—incapable flies, who tumbled into everything, and made themselves obtrusive and disagreeable generally.

Before we left, a lady belonging to our party astonished the inspector of the pigs, or rather wild-boar, by persuading him to allow her to buy a pair of young ones. He evidently admired them as little as we did, and seemed to look upon her wish to possess them as one of those freaks for which there is no accounting. But the whole matter was satisfactorily arranged; and as soon as the little *marcassins* are old enough to leave their mother, they are to be treated like vulgar little pigs, put into a common crate, and sent off by rail. This is what the wild-boar has come to in these degenerate days!

In an opposite direction, and a little farther from Dresden, is another royal residence—the castle of Weissenstein; and having found one exploration a success,

we repeated it even to the English beef-steak pie, which found such favour in the eyes of the German gentlemen, and which, it must be confessed, was manufactured by our German cook. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the drive to Weissenstein, through a valley with pretty grey rocks, and birches and other trees on either side; and the *Schloss* is built upon a rock, and into a rock, and has a romantic position. But except this, and the fact that the stables, having entrance on the side where the ground is highest, appear on the other side as being *au premier*, which is a curious position for stables, there is nothing of the look of departed grandeur you see at Moritzburg; and though the geometrical garden is pretty and bright as you look down upon it, it is small, and only such as can be seen at every English country-house of very moderate pretensions. The lunch was a great success at first, but unfortunately we had hit

upon a public holiday, and before we had finished, swarms of people arrived—curious-looking people, who were noisy and demonstrative. Some one made a true and witty application of the lines from Bishop Heber's hymn,

> "Every prospect pleases,
> And only man is vile;"

and villainously ugly they were. It was worth remarking, as, though in our various excursions we met multitudes of people, we never but there met people we wished elsewhere. As we are talking of castles, it may not be out of place to talk about the castle at Meissen. About two years ago we could not see it, because it was being restored; and now, though we did see it, the restorations are still within three years of being finished. But enough is already done to allow one to judge of their effect, and anything more beautiful it would be difficult to find. Any one who wishes to see the perfection of fresco-painting should go there.

The interior is remarkable for its stone staircase, which ought to be a pattern of all stone staircases, and which is very old. But the rooms are bewildering in number, and really perfectly beautiful; the proportions are splendid, and the restorations struck us all as being in the most perfect possible taste. Everything to enhance beauties already existing is being done; and the floors and ceilings have been beautifully arranged to carry out the grand ideas, which is making Meissen Castle quite unique. The various professors, who are painting the frescoes, were all busy. In one large hall is depicted the romantic but true story of the two princes who were stolen and recovered, —the figures all a little over life-size, and most exquisitely painted, from the first scene where princes Ernst and Albert are trembling in their bedroom as the robbers climb in at the window, to their triumphal entry into the tower on their recovery.

The figures are spirited, and the drawing and colouring faultless.

Never has it been a besetting sin of ours to wish ourselves any one else; but . . . as we went from one room to another at Meissen, we confess we could not help wishing ourselves on the throne of Saxony. There is a certain fascination about this old castle under its new aspect, while from the windows you look down upon such a sweep of country. The Elbe gains by being looked down upon from a distance, as its colour is its weak point always—not only muddy-looking, but such an ugly mud colour—and so thick!

One most exquisite room is being fitted up as a present to royalty on the occasion of the approaching silver-wedding on the part of the town, and it does the greatest credit to them: it is lovely — a worthy gift from a town renowned for its artistic taste. It is noteworthy that the beautiful effects all through the *Schloss*

are obtained by using the primary colours without blending or shading; almost without exception there is a little—a very little—gold introduced here and there with good results. Great use is made of stencilling—an art certainly carried to perfection in Germany; and in one passage (for servants, we were told) it looks exactly like stamped leather—so exactly like, that not till made to touch it did some of our party believe it was only coloured wash.

The manufactory of porcelain at Meissen, where, as every one probably knows, all Dresden china is made, gives occupation to several hundred people, and is very interesting as well as very pretty to see. All pottery or china manufactures are essentially the same up to a certain stage; but the beauty of the Meissen or Dresden china consists in the fineness of the white clay, and the secret of the transparent glaze or enamel into which the china is dipped. When this glaze is painted upon,

and set in the oven to burn, the heat melts it, and floats it over and through the colour without disturbing it. Where the Dresden china is most interesting is where the exquisite flowers are made. We were lucky enough to see a china-aster made; and to see the long narrow leaves added one by one was an insight into the patience and extraordinary dexterity required. Whilst we were there a magnificent vase with elaborate wreaths cracked in its last baking, and we could not help sympathising with the artist, who beheld in one moment the work of many long weeks spoiled: the painting alone was worth an immense sum of money. As a number of people go to see the manufactory, it seems a pity that some arrangement is not made about the means of getting there. We had a long hot walk of at least two miles, having of course often to ask our way; and we finally had to bribe an omnibus to take us back to the

station, as it belonged to one of the hotels, and we had nothing to do with this hotel. There was an evident reluctance to oblige us, which acted on the fees exacted. We saw three omnibuses, each belonging to a hotel, but not one single independent *Droschke*, or other carriage of any description; and many people hunting, like ourselves, for something to save them a dusty walk without any shade on a day of broiling heat.

We were very much amused, on returning by the train, to find that, from an indistinct knowledge of the flow of the Elbe, some English ladies always went to Meissen by train, and came back by the steamer, under the impression that they saved time! Maps were produced in vain to prove that, as the river runs down to Meissen, they had better go by boat and return by train. No argument would convince them. "We wish to save time," one of them said, obstinately. So did we—so we wasted no more upon them.

# CHAPTER XVII.

## A MIRACLE.

BOHEMIA, as we have already said, in speaking of Herrnkretchen, is singularly different in many respects from Saxony, considering that there is no sea between. You can see the different look of the people the moment you cross the border; and the difference extends further than the dark skin and black hair, the quicker movements and more intelligent-looking faces. They are a much more impressionable and more imaginative people. At this present moment a small village in Bohemia is the centre of an immense excitement; and in recounting it I offer no opinion or remark of my own,

merely relating it as a phase of life in Bohemia, having had no opportunity of verifying or disproving it, and leaving every one to explain it to themselves. I do not even say how little or how much I believe it.

For many years a poor woman in a little village called Philipsdorf has been noted for her poverty, her sufferings, and her piety. Afflicted with a loathsome disease, which was said to be incurable, even the necessary act of dressing her entailed an immense amount of self-denial on the part of those who charitably performed this office, and who did it from sincere piety themselves—even approaching her was dreadful. At last her sufferings rose to such an extent that her immediate death was announced by the doctors, who visited her, as they supposed, for the last time, on a certain evening.

She was suffering so much that sleep was quite impossible, and nothing gave her relief. All at once a bright light appeared by her bedside, and, waking the person

whose turn it was to watch by her, she called out to her, telling her to go upon her knees,—that the Virgin Mary was there, and had said to her, "My child, from now thou art whole." The next morning her sores were discovered healed—all but a very slight tumour which, in a few days, was completely cured; and after years of suffering in bed, she rose and walked. This is her story.

The enthusiasm of the village where this miracle occurred knew no bounds. The house she was in, consisting of one small room, was carefully cut bodily off and removed; while a church was erected over the place so that the altar should be set exactly over the very spot upon which the Virgin stood. Not hundreds but thousands flock to the place—some to see it, some to say their prayers, and some to get relief in various ways.

Travelling towards this place, you pass a very pretty undulating country, dotted

with villages and well wooded. The woman herself lives in a small cottage, which is exquisitely clean. She is allowed to receive nothing, either in the shape of alms or presents of any kind. The priests do not allow her to receive even a picture. We got two small but very clean beds in the cottage of one of the labourers; and not being too tired for a stroll, went out before going to bed. Without intending it exactly, we found ourselves close to the church, and seeing a light, we looked in. It was the woman herself, who was attending to the flowers, &c., and who was standing near the altar—a plain woman, in a homely dress, but with the transparent and rapt look in her face which goes far to disprove the assertion made by many of her being an impostor. No one could help feeling she believed *herself*, and was not trading on the credulity of others from the love of gain, as many people assert. A remarkable directness and simplicity of manner has also

its effect; and whatever your own convictions may be, she is evidently wrapped up in an ecstasy of religious fervour and belief.

We found, by sending our coffee to her next morning, and our bread, she would make it, and receive us at breakfast; and we did this, and she welcomed us very simply, and talked without alluding to herself in any way; but evidently she was full of religious enthusiasm. After our breakfast we went again to see the church. Under the altar and all around it are heaps and heaps of crutches, which, we were told, were left there by grateful people who came cripples and went away cured. It can be imagined that the fame of the "cures" has extended far beyond the villages in Bohemia —people of all classes flock there. It is not pretended that all are cured—many receive no benefit; but it is asserted that a great many are cured, and there are the crutches they have left behind them.

One thing we could not quite understand

was why the priests will not allow any one to talk about her cure to her. Now it seems curious that she may not relate her experience at any rate to those sincerely interested in her case, and who *wish* to believe. The reason she is not allowed to receive money is very obvious; but the other prohibition seems less so.

She spends her life almost entirely in prayer and in doing good to others, and from all accounts her life has always been singularly pious and charitable. Whatever one may one's self believe, it is a most curious thing to see the crowds of people, in the little church and round it, kneeling on the stones in the street in rapt devotion. The truth of her *cure* is attested by the doctors; and the vision she saw, or believes she saw, finds among the many who throng there absolute belief. We heard from many people that she was a "professed impostor," but we do not think so. She gives the idea of being herself profoundly impressed with

the belief of her miraculous cure. It is the "Lourdes miracle" in a somewhat different form. Chaplets and books, and all manner of things, are laid upon the stone under the altar, and of course are much prized.

At some distance there is a Cistercian convent where the monks, clad in white, observe to a great degree the rule of silence. They receive a very few, and show no niggardly hospitality; but the dead silence of the place is almost appalling. The footsteps—calm, quiet footsteps, without hurry—alone break it, and echo through the corridors and rooms. To sit down to a meal with this same extraordinary silence round one, when the very sound of a knife and fork is startlingly loud, is an experience few have had, and tells on the nerves in a singular degree.

There is something pathetic in the extreme simplicity and religious enthusiasm of the people in that district. Out of the world, and with distance between them and

great towns, they take you in imagination back to past ages: their superstitions and their minute observance of small things produce a very singular effect, because theirs is not the supine dulness of a low organisation. They are intelligent-looking and imaginative, and the relations between them and the *curés* of the parishes are what we are so often told is desirable.

He is consulted upon all possible subjects and contracts, and advises them in a very paternal manner, and assists them in his own way. It is another curious thing to notice the men when they leave off work, taking their children out, carrying little swaddled babies, and nursing and rocking them quite as well as the mothers could do. But wherever you go in Germany, you cannot help admiring the close tie that evidently subsists between a father and his children; and there is in the national character an amount of kindliness and simplicity worthy of all praise. It is also a fact worthy of attention,

and which all statistics bear out, that immorality among Roman Catholic girls is almost unknown here. I have heard this stated about Great Britain and Ireland; and if any one wishes to contradict this assertion let them examine for themselves. *Why should this be?*

# CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE SILVER WEDDING.

We count ourselves lucky to have been in Saxony on the occasion of the silver wedding of its king and queen, for certainly nothing could have been prettier or more successful than the *fêtes* given in their honour, and no occasion offered a better opportunity of seeing such a variety of the peasantry from all the different Saxon provinces.

These *fêtes*, which began by a procession of 5000 school children, lasted for a whole week, during which time in Dresden—which naturally was the great centre of everything—about 40,000 strangers were absorbed in

the town or near it. Every one was quite determined to do their best: hospitalities were quite boundless, and it was evident that nothing was to be allowed to damp the prevailing holiday spirit. Everything was propitious: the weather was magnificent, a shower considerately falling during the night laid the dust; every day the sun shone, but not oppressively; and there was just enough breeze to show off the flags to advantage. And the flags could be counted by thousands! It must be confessed that the beautiful town lends itself charmingly to the decorations—the very colour of the stone, the picturesque gables, the magnificent bridges, are all enhanced by the gorgeous colouring. What a display of bunting! The Americans, resolved to outdo every one, are not content with bunting, and their Legation is distinguished by a silken flag, which catches the light, and looks rich and beautiful. From almost every house float two or three flags; the Saxon colours

(green and white) are repeated everywhere; the German colours, often alongside, and sometimes a special flag. The union-jack appears here and there black and yellow; and red and gold, are along almost every street. In the narrower streets the flagstaffs cross, and give an impression of a perfect forest. The immense crowd is singularly silent. Many are there from a distance, and it is evident that they are bewildered and unaccustomed to the bustle of any town, much less of a town in a holiday aspect. The *Droschke* drivers are delighted to be obliged to go slow, and their perpetual e-r-r-r adds to the confusion. Every variety of dress is there, and the immense diversity of expression is in itself most interesting.

The children's procession was striking—an immense number is always effective. The girls were all dressed in white, with either green ribbons or green wreaths across their shoulders: the little faces looked most bright and happy. The queen is very much be-

loved—as much beloved among the poor as our own queen. She takes the most untiring interest in all schools, and has many under her immediate protection. She herself took some of these children to their first communion, and spoke to them most earnestly beforehand; and her constant presence among them makes them wish to do her all possible honour—no idle compliment, but the spontaneous gratitude of those who have felt her benefits.

Next day came what we considered one of the most interesting parts of the *fête;* and we drove down to Pillnitz, in Saxon Switzerland, where it was to take place early in the afternoon. But it must be remembered that between us and Pillnitz lies a certain ferry, with a swinging boat only capable of accommodating two big or three small carriages and horses. When we arrived at this ferry, we found that so great had been the traffic across, that there were twenty-eight carriages to cross before

our turn came; and before we had been there a quarter of an hour, there were at least fifty behind us. What a long time they took! Luckily, as we knew Pillnitz possessed only one inn, and one or two very small restaurants, we had taken some cold tea with us; and as we had to wait till very nearly 5.30 till our turn came, we were really glad of it. We gave up all hope of seeing the procession; and once across the river, we tried to resign ourselves to the disappointment in store for us, and to talk ourselves into the belief that it did not much matter, in that half-hearted way common to all mankind when it is trying to persuade itself against its convictions. But on entering the small town, and going up the steep hill leading to the *Schloss*, we heard the unmistakable hubbub and murmur of an approaching crowd; and a benign policeman rode up to us, and entreated us to go into a recess on the road, as the procession was just going to pass.

We had barely time to get into position when it came, and if we had arranged everything beforehand, we could not have been better placed. It was well worth seeing. The different provinces had sent up representatives in goodly numbers; and we were glad to notice among the round-faced young beauties—evidently conscious of their good looks—elderly women, whose upright figures and free walk told of the usual basket on the head and not on the back, and who were evidently perfectly happy at being free of all burdens for one day—perhaps the only day in their lives. The prettiest dresses were the Thuringens, with a coloured handkerchief arranged round the head, and finished by a big bow in front, a white linen bodice, and coloured petticoats. (How often one regrets the absence of any national and convenient dress at home!) Exquisitely clean they all looked. The women walked hand in hand, six in a row; and each province had

its band and banners, &c. Each trade was represented. There was an immense harvest-cart, followed by troops of haymakers with their rakes and sun-hats; an enormous waggon with beer, crowned by a figure of Bacchus. The prettiest waggon was the gardeners, as the flowers were most beautifully arranged; and the blacksmiths' cart, or rather waggon, had a real anvil, on which men took turns to show off their strength; and the din of the regular hammering added to the noise, at any rate, but must have been rather fatiguing on a broiling day—the hottest this summer, and hot even then, when one rather expected the cool of evening. An immense crowd followed the procession, which had been to pay their respects to the king and queen, who charmed them all by the evident pleasure with which they received them.

The procession over, we began to feel anxious for some rest for the horses. The inn was simply inapproachable. Hun-

dreds swarmed inside, and hundreds stood round the door; tents erected in the meadows overflowed, beer-barrels were hastily tapped on the trestles, and hundreds swarmed round that. We left the carriage and went up to the *Schloss*, where the restaurant had similar crowds to contend with. Under the trees every bench was occupied, and every atom of bread (except a little black bread) had long been devoured. There was nothing to be had, and we felt glad we had had our tea and were in a measure independent; but we hoped to hear the 8000 students sing, —who were to land from an illuminated ship, from the Elbe side of the palace,— and stayed our hunger by eating cherries, inexhaustible supplies of which seemed the only available thing.

The singing was fine; but we doubted there being anything like 8000 voices. Experience indeed has taught us that when it comes to numbers, people are very vague

here, as in other lands. The ship was prettily decked with flowers and lights; but alas for the poetical idea! It was tugged by a little puffing, ugly, dirty steamer, with the most horribly black smoke, which was drifted by the light wind everywhere and blackened everything: certainly it might have been made to consume its own smoke on this occasion, as it completely spoiled the effect. We came home by the private ferry belonging to the king, had no waiting, and an enchanting drive home by the Elbe, on a warm still evening with a glorious moon, turning the most prosaic villages into romance.

The evening after this we were seated on a balcony in Dresden behind the royal arms of a friendly photographer *au premier*, to see the *Bergleute* (miner's) torch-light procession pass from the palace to the Böhmische Bahnhof. From our position we could see about a mile and a half down the principal street, and were entreated to

be there in good time, as the crowd would assemble early, when we might find it difficult to pass. We did so, and had to wait a considerable time, during which our hospitable host supplied us in the most liberal manner with cakes and Russian bonbons—the latter very peculiar in point of flavour, and absolutely delicious.

At length the blaze of lights at a distance told of the approach; and we quite believed in there being 5000 this time, for the procession was endless. The miners had all, of course, their holiday dresses; but those dresses spoke of the various employments. The overseers walked at one side and in front, on the principle of officers commanding their regiments. The men employed in the silver-mines had linen wrapped round their heads and throats under their caps, and looked, in the glare of the torches, not unlike Arabs in burnooses. Each carried the little lamp used in the different mines; and the small light shone, we thought, with a

pathetic contrast to the torches, speaking of the difference of the men's daily lives. What fine faces some had, and how calmly they moved along! Of course they were not cheered, because out of England you never hear cheering; but the crowd showed great enthusiasm, and cried "Hoch" with all their might; the ladies waved pocket-handkerchiefs, and some clapped their hands—there was quite a demonstration; and the men seemed thoroughly to appreciate their welcome. No words of mine can convey an idea of the beauty of the scene,—the long stretch of gaily-decorated houses blazing with light, and the bright glare of the torches. Every now and then red or blue lights showed out a picturesque tower, or threw an extra light on the procession; and the vivid yellow of the torches gave an almost unearthly look to the mass of moving figures. The torches were many of them dipped in wax, and gave a beautiful light. When they had walked up the street, they

collected in the great open space near the railway station, and moved about, discussing the events of the day—making, by their movements with their torches still burning, a beautiful impromptu picture. At length the torches were extinguished, and the train bore them off to their respective homes,—to begin work again, we heard, next morning.

The great day of all followed; and again we went out to see the illuminations, and another and yet more numerous torch-light procession. With that practical directness which characterises Germans, and makes them get exactly what they want without going to fabulous expense, they were the first to illuminate by the simplest means, though their example is now widely followed, and certainly the expense is "next to nothing." On the sill of every window, on the ledge of every house, wherever a light can be placed, the small earthenware pots are placed close together, filled with the refuse of kitchen-fat, and rush-wick in the

middle. These pots cost one halfpenny, burn from four to six hours, and if the pot is restored safe an allowance is made for it. They are the same as those creeping into general use at home. The light they give is most beautiful—so clear and so steady; and the effect of the thousands upon thousands of these lights, tracing out the buildings, makes an inconceivably beautiful effect. As far as the eye could see, these lights were blazing. There were, of course, transparencies, and gas-letters, and crowns, and many things besides in gas; and over one restaurant there was a most successful illumination, of which we endeavoured vainly to learn the secret. It was the representation of a waterfall, most beautifully done: even the look of spray was given; and when beneath the house over which it was, the illusion still remained perfect.

We drove round the whole town, which was like fairyland, the bridges being splendid, and finally drew up at a good point for

seeing the procession. Just before it came we noticed two little scraps of boys—such *little* fellows!—holding tight to each other, and hoping against hope to see *something*, with a mass of people in front of them. At length the smallest one laid his arm against a railing, and, putting his head down, fairly dropped asleep. It was quite impossible to leave him to a chance knock-down, so we made them get up, and took the little one into the carriage, and put the other on the box: their ecstasy was complete. They were the gentlest little creatures, with soft voices and dark eyes, neatly dressed, and such a long way from home. How many hours had they stood there, to be, in all probability, disappointed at last! We had not quite reckoned on the invasion of more children on the box, who immediately scrambled up; but they did no harm, and certainly their delight very much enhanced our pleasure. The procession was not so pretty or so interesting to us as that of the miners

had been. One detachment—the academy boys and young men—were mounted on horseback, and dressed in fancy dresses. There were thousands of torches, trophies without end, Chinese lanterns, and many bands of music. Nothing more remarkable in its way can possibly be than the extreme docility and order of an immense German crowd. These thousands of people of course pushed to a certain extent, but, as a rule, gave way to each other. You heard no bad language, and hardly a rough voice. It is quite true what a German gentleman said of them,—they are the quietest and best-natured people in the world, with a suspicious dislike of policemen. And yet hear some of the upper classes speak of them! they talk as if they were hardly human beings. We frankly acknowledge that in the provinces they do strike one as having a lower organisation than, for instance, Scotch or English (not to speak of Irish) peasants, but all their tendencies are good.

They are peaceful, frugal, and industrious, and always ready to do a kindness.

Balls, diplomatic dinners, presentations, a review, and receptions, must have made this a most fatiguing week for royalty, whose guests were numerous and unceasing. But there is no use in describing what is more or less always the same thing in all countries.

The last day of the *fêtes* arrived; and we arranged to drive to the highest attainable point to witness a country illumination, expecting fireworks and bonfires, and not much more. But Saxony was determined these rejoicings should be universal and memorable; and, arrived at our destination, we looked round upon a panorama miles in extent. On every hill or rising ground, in every village, and all along the river, blazed bonfires and coloured lights. Some of the bonfires had enormous poles in the centre, made of pitch and tow; and these pillars of fire were really wonderful. All round

the horizon, as far as the eye could see, brilliant lights were blazing. At our feet lay the three miles of streets which constitute Dresden. The river shone beautifully, with innumerable lights from the bridges; and the evening was so still that the rush of rockets all round was quite distinctly heard, whenever there was a pause in the music. How many thousand people were congregated there we do not know; but the crowds, moving from one place to another to try the different standing-points, were quite wonderful. The patient coachmen and more patient horses moved as they could — slowly, and of course with the hoarse warning to which one gets so thoroughly accustomed in Germany.

Long we watched the curious and beautiful scene. Round some of the bonfires stood groups of people, who every now and then threw various chemicals on the fires, changing their colour as if by magic. The one distressing part of it all was, to see

some of the gentlemen's horses coming panting up the one steep hill with bearing-rein so tight that they could hardly move. In London, now, humanity has at last done away with bearing-reins. In the country, few allow ignorant coachmen to use them; and we longed to let the poor things free—to climb a really steep hill of about two miles in length without torture. It is amusing to notice the difference between the manners of foreign coachmen and our own. Without meaning to be in the least disrespectful, a German coachman receives an order from his master, and either contradicts him flatly, or argues the point with him. He evidently conceives his master to know nothing about horses, and probably may be right. All the same, to see him turning round on his box and vindicating his opinions, is a curious thing to see; and in any encounter we have witnessed, it invariably ends in the master giving in. Another feature in Germany is the enor-

mous quantities of fruit-trees which line the roads, and which is one reason why fruit is so cheap in central and south Germany.

These fruit-trees belong to the farmers through whose farm the road passes. When it has "set," the crop is sold to the various fruit dealers, who go round the country to buy, and who, of course, buy entirely on speculation, as the most promising crop may be destroyed by hailstorms, heavy rains, or too dry a season, which brings countless insects and grubs to feed upon it. No one seems to touch this fruit—thousands pass up and down—no damage is done; and it is an instance of the restraining power of public opinion, as nothing can well be more tempting to the thirsty wayfarer than to see hanging above his head clusters of rich cherries, which predominate in Saxony; unguarded vineyards, as on the Rhine; or plums, which seem the special produce of the country

lying near the Rhine, and which look so beautiful and cool under the thick green leaves. In the height of the cherry season the cherry orchards are well worth a visit. For a very small sum you are allowed to eat as many as you like. They are cheap everywhere then; and you get a good large dish, quite full, for the *groschen*, which is a very little more than our penny. The only time we ever saw condign punishment administered to a child was on the evening of the *fête* we have been describing. A little fat rogue, seated on his father's head, was in dangerous proximity to a great bunch of cherries overhead. Could three-year-old morality withstand it? But the vigorous rap of his mother's umbrella on the small fist must have made a lasting impression. Close to where we were standing is Moreau's monument—this spot being more celebrated as being the central point of Europe than on account of the hero it is supposed to immortalise. As we drove down

the hill, the people were crowding to the different restaurants, where all that good music, coloured lamps, and cheap food can do to attract is to be had. The wreaths of coloured lamps were very pretty. All the flowering-shrubs gave out their scent—the giant syringas, and a few late acacias, and some honeysuckle. It is delightful to enjoy the fresh air without what we must call the "bouquet d'Allemagne," which spoils every walk so completely in every town.

Nor only in a town. Drive at night through newly-sown fields, and you find that the practical sense which makes them turn everything to account does not conduce to savoury odours, of which they seem not to be in the very least aware, or are so accustomed to them that the greatest trial to olfactory nerves never seems to disturb their equanimity.

The night was oppressively hot; and, standing on the balcony, from which a good country view is to be seen, the lights still

shone upon the distant hills, looking like watch-fires. At first, as they lit up, we could not help thinking of the beacon-fires in old days. One flash seemed to answer another; and one could understand how rapidly the communication could thus be made. Besides the fires and lights there were small bands of young men with lanterns on tall poles; and, as if to show what they also could do in the way of illumination, the glow-worms and the fireflies were doing their best,—and though the latter are comparatively small in number here, there are still enough to be very pretty.

At length all began to be still; and a grey streak of dawn showed that the short and memorable night was over, and the *fêtes*, too, which certainly will always remain in our memories as the prettiest and most successful we have ever seen. It was the last *fête* we had an opportunity of witnessing in Germany. Other duties called

us home. And it is seldom that a stay, from one end of it to the other, can be looked back upon with nothing but pleasant feelings; and, looking back, we often regret the ease of life, the music, our friends, and our German village.

THE END.

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